

TOMORROW

Ruling... The Times Profile: Francois Mitterrand, President of France
Party... Never apologize, never explain - and mind the stairs: the Neurotic Partygoer's Guide
Balancing... Sorting out the EEC money muddle to balance Britain's books
Books... John Plumb on Lord Clarendon, A. S. Byatt on Charles Darwin and Philip Howard's choice of the year's best paperbacks
Final score... David Miller's sports review of the year

Global cuts holidays by £500,000

Global Holidays has announced a reduction in its brochure prices for 1984 of more than £500,000, with savings of £50 on many of last year's holiday costs.
 It is the latest move in the price-cutting war which has already seen the three largest tour operators reduce their prices.

Ship intercepted

An Argentine cargo vessel infringed the 150-mile Falkland Islands protection zone, on Christmas Eve, but left after being seen by RAF fighters, the Ministry of Defence said.

Union rift

The National Union of Mine-workers is trying to set up an alternative to Trade Unions for Labour Victory, the unions' political fund-raising body.

Cuban risk

There is a growing risk of Cuban involvement in the fighting in southern Angola between South African and Angolan troops.

Afghan appeal

Britain and the other EEC countries marked the fourth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with an appeal to Moscow to withdraw its forces.

Reuters check

The Labour Party is to press for Parliament to examine the decision by its directors to float the Reuters news agency on the stock market.

Village rebels

The residents of a Lower Saxony village are resisting British Army of the Rhine plans to build a mock village in the vicinity to practice anti-guerrilla warfare.

Simpler rules

The City Takeover Panel, which supervises company bids and mergers, is to simplify its rule book, according to Mr John Hignett, the outgoing director general.

National knack

Burrough Hill Lad, a heavily-backed favourite, gave Jenny Pittman, the trainer, her second successive Welsh Grand National win at Cheltenham yesterday.

Botham booked

Ian Botham, the England cricket all-rounder, was booked for a foul tackle when playing football for Scunthorpe United.

Leader page 11
 Letters: On the poverty pool, from Dr K V Roberts, and the President of the Retail Book, Stationery and Allied Trades Employees' Association; Scott Lithgow, from Professor J Pickett; sugar, from the Right Hon. Lord Kinnock.
Leading articles: M Andropov and the Russian economy; the Pope meets his assailant; Select Committees
Features, page 8-10
 How killer satellites could help preserve the peace; Hongkong: the Taiwan factor; life sentence anomalies; disabled deprived
Wednesday Page: haul of the wild; Spectrum: Sweden's new mood of puritanism
Obituary, page 12
 Miss Violet Carson; Professor Johanna van Lohuizen de Leeuw

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Scots steel threat renewed after US deal collapses

By Edward Townsend, Industrial Correspondent

Proposals for a unique multi-million pound "steel swap" deal between Britain and the United States have been abandoned, posing a renewed threat to the survival of the Ravenscraig steelworks in Scotland.

The project, to sell Ravenscraig steel slabs to United States Steel of Pennsylvania, was finally laid to rest last night in simultaneous announcements from London and New York.

Mr Robert Haslam, chairman of the British Steel Corporation, said that the corporation still wanted to phase out one of its three strip mills - the other two are at Port Talbot and Llanwern in South Wales. "We are not saying that Ravenscraig is eventually the works that will close, but its long-term future is in doubt."

Ravenscraig employs about 4,000 workers of whom about half work in the strip mill. Their future would be resolved in talks with the Government soon.

Mr Haslam added that the joint project had been a brave concept and if it had been pulled off "it would have ensured more jobs being retained in British Steel".

British Steel, which is losing about £2.5m a week, and has ruled out reaching break-even in 1983-84, hoped the joint

venture would help it back to profitability.

The plan was to smelt Australian iron ore at Ravenscraig into steel slabs for United States Steel's loss-making Fairless works in Pennsylvania. British Steel was to have invested a huge sum, initially \$600m (£400m), into United States Steel to finance modernization of outdated American works and in return would have secured markets for the Ravenscraig output.

But last night's statement said that terms mutually beneficial to both companies could not be concluded. It was agreed to end discussions so that other options available to both could be pursued. One option would be for British Steel to supply slab to US Steel on a normal commercial contract basis.

Mr Haslam said the discussions had represented an attempt by the two corporations to find solutions to serious problems which could not be ignored. "It is important that the implications of the outcome should not be misunderstood by anyone. In the case of British Steel, the problem remains of wide strip capacity, surplus to foreseeable market requirement. Faced with the pressing need to end its present losses,

BSC will have to examine all other options."

The joint venture proposal was the brainchild of the previous BSC chairman, Mr Ian MacGregor, and Mr David Roderick, chairman of US steel. Mr Haslam, who took over at British Steel in September, said last night that the gap between the two companies had widened: "US steel have steadily increased their asking price, while we wanted to pull back from our original position."

The venture has been opposed on both sides of the Atlantic by trade union and political leaders and church men, but Mr Haslam said: "Opponents should not regard it as a victory or draw solace from it because the basic underlying problems still remain. It removes some uncertainty and we can now proceed to bring our corporation into line with our view of the market."

Mr Haslam refused to be drawn on which of the strip mills would be affected. The corporation is committed to a £170m modernization at Port Talbot, which appears to have the most secure future.

On the question of redundancies, Mr Haslam said the corporation had gone through a

Continued on page 2, col 3

American plants face closure

From Bailey Morris, Washington

The US steel industry faced a further round of heavy job losses yesterday as directors of the giant US Steel Corporation met to vote on the closure of as many as six outmoded plants.

The \$1bn retrenchment would be the biggest since 1979, when America's largest steel-maker closed 13 plants and laid off a huge workforce employed in smaller towns which have still not recovered from the closures.

The decision to consider more large scale closures came after the United Steelworkers' union refused the company's demands for big new wage concessions. US Steel warned union leaders that it would have no choice but to close plants in

Illinois, Alabama, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

By cutting capacity sharply, US Steel apparently hopes to lower its break-even point from 70 per cent to 50 per cent of capacity in an effort to achieve what many believe to be an impossible dream - a profit in steel next year.

Because of a combination of factors such as world overproduction of steel, the recession and inefficient plants, US Steel has not made a profit in any quarter since 1981. It has experienced pre-tax operating losses of £1.35bn over the last seven quarters.

The plight of US Steel and other large American steel companies has led to renewed

calls for tighter limits on imports from Europe, Japan and the Third World. These demands are likely to swell in the coming election year, because of the large lay-offs and an intense campaign by the steel industry.

The Reagan Administration has also been trying to reduce the competition from low-cost Third World steel producers by pressing its allies in the industrialized world to reduce their subsidies for construction of steel mills in less developed nations. But despite a strong American diplomatic effort Japan and Austria have opposed the plan and the British Government does not support it.

Rajiv fitted for the Gandhi mantle

From Michael Hamlyn, Calcutta

Mrs Indira Gandhi swept into the Bengal capital yesterday to preside over the first primary session of her party since 1972. The 8,000 or so delegates, mostly clad in traditional white dhoti and Nehru jacket topped with a Gandhi cap, appear, however, to be attending a service of consecration for her son Rajiv.

Rajiv Gandhi was a simple airline pilot with a nice Italian wife until the death of his brother Sanjay. The he too donned the white homespun uniform of a Congress politician and became his mother's closest adviser.

Since posts in the party have ceased to be elective, she nominated him as General Secretary and leader of the youth wing of the party. Now, apparently, the time has come to appoint him officially as the party's leader.

Rajiv's presence is dominating the city. True, there are posters showing Mrs Gandhi herself 12ft tall with hand upraised in a Roman imperial salute, and a slogan such as "Leader of Leaders: Champion of World Peace". But there are almost as many smaller posters of Rajiv, labelled: "Today's Leader: Tomorrow's Hope".

As you get closer to the conference hall the posters of Rajiv become more and more dense. Just outside the driveway is a triumphal gateway, draped in orange green and white, the colours of both India and the Congress Party, bearing the legend in foot high letters "Hope is Youth: Youth is Future" on the left, and "Long Live Rajiv Gandhi" on the right.

Just outside the hall his face, 8ft high, with two and a half feet of blue-chinned jowls, peers at the assembling congressmen from under a Gandhi cap like theirs. Inside the hall the Indian National Congress are commemorated with plaster portraits of the Congress Party, and then run through the Bannergies and Nehrus who presided over it. The last plaque says simply: "Long Live Rajiv Gandhi".

The meeting is unusual in a number of other ways. Previous party conferences have been



Indian dynasty: Rajiv Gandhi and his mother.

held after elections to party office, and debates in the conference held to influence party policy and win reelection for the delegates from their constituents. Without elections the delegates have a constituency of only one or perhaps two persons to please - Mrs Gandhi and son. Disagreement with her policies is therefore unlikely.

Instead of the conference being an opportunity for the hierarchy to hear of the feelings of the grass roots workers, it is likely to be much more of a preselection rally than a traditional party conference.

The general election must come within the next 12 months and the series of party meetings which began with the Congress Committee meeting in Bombay a few months ago is being used to prepare the activists for the struggle to come.

This is the first Congress conference since independence that has been held in a state not controlled by Congress. The Communist Party (Marxist) which dominates the left front coalition running West Bengal has, however, done its best to make sure that everything goes smoothly.

The plenary session is also the first of a series of events commemorating the centenary of the founding of the Indian National Congress. Its inaugural meeting actually took place in Bombay on December 28, 1885. But this represented an amalgamation or other bodies and other meetings, the first of which was the national conference held in Calcutta 100-years ago today.

Thatcher to keep on course

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

The Government's determination to hold firm to its present economic course in the pursuit of rewards in the next decade is expected to be the keynote theme of the Prime Minister's new year message to her party at the weekend.

After what ministers concede has been a surprisingly difficult few months - given the size of the Conservative Party's general election victory last June - Mrs Margaret Thatcher will tell the Tory faithful that the tough policies pursued by the Government since 1979 are improving the industrial and economic climate, and that the sacrifices which have been made should not be wasted.

Her message of guarded optimism is unlikely to contain any specific promise about a reduction in unemployment, but the general theme will be that if Britain sticks to its steady path the benefits for the country in the late 1980s could be great.

At the same time Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, in his new year message will be emphasizing the crucial importance to the party of next year's European parliamentary elections and the local elections in May, which he regards as a significant electoral test.

The Labour leader believes that the party's improved showing in the polls since he

Continued on back page, col 1



Face to face: The Pope talking in jail yesterday to Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who is serving a life sentence for trying to kill him two years ago.

Reagan accepts blame for 241 Beirut bomb deaths

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

President Reagan, speaking in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces, said yesterday that he took full blame for the deaths of 241 American servicemen in the terrorist bombing of the American Marines headquarters in Beirut on October 23.

Saying that American troops were not properly equipped to deal with the "new phenomenon of state-sponsored terrorism", he made clear that the officers commanding the Marine contingent at the time would not be court-martialed because of inadequate security arrangements at the compound.

"I do not believe... that the local commanders on the ground - men who have already suffered quite enough - should be punished for not fully comprehending the nature of today's terrorist threat," the President said.

"If there is to be blame it properly rests here in this office and with this President. And I accept responsibility for the bad as well as the good."

The President delayed his departure for a week's holiday in California by half an hour to make a special statement in advance of publication of the Pentagon's report on the Beirut bombing.

The report, said to be extremely critical of security arrangements at the Marine headquarters, was to have been released at the end of last week, but was delayed as the last moment because of divisions within the Administration over how to present it. It is now expected to be released later this week, with some deletions.

Mr Reagan said he had read the Pentagon report, prepared by a commission headed by retired Admiral Robert Long, and "wholeheartedly agreed" with its conclusion that Ameri-

can forces were by tradition and training inadequately equipped to deal with terrorists.

The main thrust of his statement was the need for the US and other Western democracies to develop a new approach to the problem.

For terrorists to be curbed "civilized countries must begin a new effort to work together, to share intelligence, to improve our training and security of our forces, to deny a haven or legal protection for terrorist groups. And most important of all to hold increasingly accountable those countries which sponsor terrorism and terrorist activity around the world."

● BEIRUT: Two British soldiers with the multinational force suffered slight injuries yesterday when an explosive device went off as their Ferret scout car drove by. (Our Correspondent writes).

Kremlin power vacuum worries President

From Our Own Correspondent, Washington

In an end-of-year assessment of US-Soviet relations, President Reagan has expressed concern about the problems of dealing with the Kremlin under the ailing President Andropov and a new tendency by military leaders to make warlike statements without obtaining authorization from the political leadership.

However, in an interview with Time magazine, he said there was less danger of a war between the superpowers than when he took office.

The interview was noteworthy for its conciliatory tone and the moderate view of the Soviet Union expressed by Mr Reagan. Asked if he would repeat a remark he had previously made about Russia being the "focus of evil", he replied: "No. I would not say things like that again, even after some of the things that have been done recently."

He explained that he had used tough language to "show them how we felt, what our views were and why he thought it necessary to build up our military defence...."

"What more of an international superpower they could be if it was not just in the military that they were super, but if they could join the family of nations as trading partners, working together, as all of us are, for the improvement of their own people's standard of living."

The President did not refer directly to the illness which has kept President Andropov out of the public eye for four months, but admitted that the US had a "lack of information about where he stands. It isn't like dealing with Brezhnev after years in the Kremlin. You knew where he was and felt you knew how to reach him."

Andropov analysis, page 6

Bargain-hunters out in force

By Tony Samstag and John Withero

Thousands of bargain-hunters, undeterred by the fear of further bombings, carried on shopping almost as usual in central London yesterday, the first day of the post-Christmas sales.

If the Harrods bombing of December 17, which killed six, and the small explosion opposite Selfridges on Christmas night had been intended to disrupt, they had clearly failed.

The police said that they had located dozens of suspicious packages and there had been one controlled explosion in Baker Street of a parcel. It had not been a bomb.

away for illegal parking in the area of the sales.

Scotland Yard said that its appeal for people to travel by public transport had been partially effective and there had been fewer cars than normal at the start of the sales.

After the Harrods bomb blast, the Home Office announced that an extra 700 policemen were being assigned to central London and there were large numbers of uniformed and plainclothes policemen on duty yesterday.

Despite an unusually low start, which department store spokesmen unanimously attributed to curtailed London Transport services and parking restrictions, by mid-morning business was booming.

Crowds milled along Oxford Street, with many eating and drinking at fountains in the unusually mild weather.

Liberty thought that there were fewer people this year, but they were more determined. Casual shoppers might have stayed at home, but "those with their eye on something" were out in force (Sales guide, back page).

● Police Constable John Gordon, who lost a leg in the Harrods explosion, was still in "critical but stable" condition at Westminster Hospital yesterday. Police Sergeant Christopher Stanger and Police Sergeant Andrew Melham, who were also injured were both said to be making good progress.

The Pope blesses assailant in jail

By Our Foreign Staff

Mehmet Ali Agca went down on his knees yesterday in repentance before the Pope, the man he once tried to kill, and received forgiveness and a papal embrace.

The Pope saw him privately in his cell for 20 minutes during a tour of Rahibbia jail in Rome. Agca is serving part of his life sentence there for shooting the Pope on May 13, 1981.

He paced the bare cell waiting for the Pope to arrive and when he entered Agca bent and kissed his ring.

Agca, unshaven and wearing blue jeans and a blue crew-neck sweater appeared tense but the Pope put him at ease.

"So this is where you stay", the Pope said in Italian. "Yes", Agca replied with a smile.

"How do you feel, do you feel all right?" the Pope, who wore a white cassock, asked him.

He answered "yes". The two men then sat down knee to knee on plastic chairs placed close together before the cell's radiator.

They whispered into each other's ears. Both men often held their heads in their hands and the Pope took Agca's hands in his several times.

The meeting had a sombre, confessional atmosphere, with the Pope often bringing his head close to Agca's lips to hear him. Agca once wiped his eyes.

Before they parted, Agca knelt before the Pope and kissed his hands, one still marked by a bullet wound from his gun.

The Pope wished him Happy New Year and gave him a silver and mother-of-pearl rosary.

"Grazie, grazie," "Thank you, Thank you," Agca replied.

Afterwards the Pope said: "I spoke as to a brother whom I have pardoned and who has my complete trust." But he would not say what they had talked about. "That is a secret that must remain between me and him", he said.

"I also believe that the meeting today is providential. It was not planned or programmed, but it took place. And the Lord gave us the grace to be able to meet each other as men and as brothers."

Later, talking to women prisoners at the jail, he elaborated his theme: Providence had intervened in an "extraordinary and also wonderful way in that today after two years, I'm able to meet my assailant and repeat the pardon that I expressed immediately toward him and was later to declare publicly when I was able from the hospital".

The 20-minute encounter caused outrage in Turkey where Agca has been condemned to death for murdering a newspaper editor.

HOMELINK
ADDITIONAL LOAN QUOTATION
 J. S. AND L. SMITH
 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570,

Scargill leads move to replace unions' political finance body

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

Political warfare has broken out within Trade Unions for Labour Victory, the umbrella body formed to channel cash to the Labour Party to fight general and local elections.

The National Union of Mineworkers has invited "interested persons and organizations" to quit the TULV and join a rival concern dedicated to the left-wing 1983 election manifesto and Labour Party conference decisions.

Mr Arthur Scargill, president of the NUM, said last night: "I stand by the union's position on TULV. This is contained in a three-page confidential circular to other militant unions warning them that the fund-raising body is bringing financial and political pressure to bear on the Labour Party to amend policy."

His hardline initiative has been condemned by union moderates as "clearly intended to be highly divisive", but Mr Mostyn (Moss) Evans, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, has also asked the miners: "Do we smell a witch-burn here?"

Mr David Bannister, chairman of the TULV and general secretary of the General Municipal, Boilmakers and Allied Trade Union, has asked for a meeting with the miners' national executive to discuss the breakdown move, which could cause the five-year-old organization to founder.

So far, the miners have not replied, although the NUM circular makes specific charges despite denials that Trade Unions for Labour Victory is a policy-making body.

The Scargill letter claims that TULV leaders met in the House of Commons to ensure that there was no contested election for the leader-deputy leader of the Labour Party in election year.

They had also met Mr James Mortimer, general secretary of the party, to tell him that there should be no increase in trade union affiliation fees and "as a result no motion was discussed on trade union contribution" at this year's conference, it is claimed.

The miners further allege: "The TULV is an alternative service of funding for the Labour Party, and as such can determine how to grant money to the party and on what terms. This power over the purse strings has frequently led to discussions between the TULV and Mr Mortimer on matters of policy."

All these charges are hotly denied in a circular prepared by the TULV executive which is being sent to constituent unions. It insists that there has been no coordination of votes about the party leadership and describes as "totally false" the allegation that the unions' power over the purse strings has led to policy talks with party officials.

The NUM document discloses that the miners' executive has "decided to authorize the national officials to conduct discussions with other interested parties and organizations to provide the necessary machinery whereby the role of

This internal conflict is bound to embarrass Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, who wants an end to fratricidal activity within the party.

Antagonists: Mr Scargill (left) and Mr Mostyn Evans, who suspects a witch-hunt by the miners.

the TULV may be superfluous, and unity can be sought on the basis of the 1983 manifesto and Labour Party conference decisions."

The miners' initiative is so far falling on stony ground. Moderates who dominate the TULV executive would be "extremely unhelpful at a time when the party is being reestablished, and when the TULV has preserved trade union unity throughout the past four years."

It seems certain, however, that Mr Scargill will continue sniping at the unions' political cash organization, which has already suffered the defection of the right-wing Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers on grounds embarrassingly similar to the charges made by the NUM.

The Scargill papers disclose that the TULV received an income from affiliated unions of £235,000 in 1981-82 and £306,000 in 1982-83. Its cash flow in the half-year to August 31, this year, was £450,000, and the TULV has lent £250,000 to the Labour Party.

The miners' executive has until recently had observer status within the TULV, and received relevant documents from it, but even that connexion has been severed in the wake of NUM allegations that regional TULV bodies have "actively campaigned against the selection of certain candidates and elsewhere have used their financial clout to influence regional parties". Those charges are also denied.

This internal conflict is bound to embarrass Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, who wants an end to fratricidal activity within the party.



Early risers: Snow drops (*Galanthus nivalis*) flowering in the rock garden at Kew Gardens, west London, yesterday (Photograph: Suresh Karadia).

Anger over TV film on bombing

From Our Correspondent Llandudno

An MEP is protesting to the BBC about a programme about John Jenkins, a former army sergeant who was jailed for 10 years for his part in the bombing campaign before the invasion of the Prince of Wales in 1969.

The programme, *The Extremists*, is to be shown on BBC Wales tomorrow night, but Miss Beata Brookes, Conservative European MP for North Wales, said yesterday: "I think it is appalling that just after the Harrods carnage a film like this should be shown."

"This man Jenkins deserves the Royal Family, there is talk of a threat to blow them up, and claims that an assassination squad existed. It is quite vicious stuff."

"If the BBC thought it right to apologize for playing *The Mountains of Mourne* the day after the Harrods bombing, it should show equal sensitivity and take off this film."

The dramatized documentary, which is at hour and a half long, was made with Jenkins's cooperation after his release from prison. He is now serving two years at Dartmoor for hindering the arrest of a wanted man.

The BBC said yesterday: "The programme is a programme which has been completed for some time but we were unable to show it because of the conspiracy trial in Cardiff and other events."

"Although it is a play based on real events which happened in Wales, they are events which occurred a decade and a half ago. Unfortunately, terrorist activities appear to be still with us but there is no connexion between events portrayed in the film and the recent tragedy in London. Indeed the film does serve as a warning of the consequences of such activities."

TUC wants action on tax evaders

By Our Labour Editor

The Government is accused today of being more zealous in prosecuting poor social security scroungers than rich tax dodgers.

In a report to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the TUC demands tougher action against all forms of tax evasion, including publication of the names of defaulters operating in the "black economy" thought to be worth £5,500m a year.

Union leaders involved in tax administration say in a 4,000-word document that many people on low incomes are having to pay excessive tax because of evasion by the better-off.

"No other EEC country taxes its low-income citizens so heavily. There has also been a dramatic increase in the number of people depending on means-tested benefits, with 6.5 million people now claiming supplementary benefit."

But tax evasion and avoidance have continued to grow, the TUC argues, and "there is a popular view that the black economy represents a dynamic and innovative sector of the economy as a whole."

Quoting the Keith committee report on tax reform, the TUC says that that is being "penny-wise, pound foolish" because these investigators generally yield returns of four to five times the cost of their salaries.

"The Government's approach to the black economy is inequitable when compared with its attitude towards other types of fraudulent activity", the paper says.

"There is a much higher rate of prosecution of people defrauding the social security system, despite the smaller sums of money involved. The Government does not appear to be as zealous in tracking down those well-off individuals who evade tax and their obligations to the community."

The TUC points out that the staff of the Inland Revenue is to be cut by 9.9 per cent over the next four years, risking "serious damage" to revenue collection. The unions concede that ministers have given "belated attention" to increasing staff in the offices tracking down defaulters, but argue that there are still insufficient resources.

But in North Wales, the weather was so mild that people sat in the sunshine on the sea front at Colwyn Bay.

Forecast, back page

SAS increases checks on potential trouble spots

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

Forces of the Army's Special Air Service Regiment (SAS) and the Royal Marines' Special Boat Squadron have increased their activities of surveying possible trouble areas around the world.

It is one of their long-standing tasks to be acquainted with areas where they could become involved militarily. That means being aware of the location of possible parachute or aircraft landing sites, checking which beaches are suitable for amphibious landings, and knowing the location of politically sensitive buildings.

It is believed that the level of activity has been increased because of fears that many Commonwealth islands have so little defensive capability that they could be seized.

The kind of event which caused anxiety is thought to have been evidence of plans by mercenaries groups to organize coups d'état in the Seychelles. In 1981, there were reports that the SAS had been active in support of the Government of Sir Dawda Jawara, President of Gambia, after an attempted coup.

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RAF saves sheep from flood

By Our Labour Editor

An RAF helicopter rescued two estate workers and 18 sheep stranded by a flash flood at Loch Maree in Wester Ross yesterday.

Mr Archie MacLellan, an estate manager, and his son-in-law, Mr David Price, were trying to reach the sheep in a small boat, but their engine failed. The Lossiemouth helicopter picked up the two men, then took them to the animals, which were loaded into a net slung under the helicopter and rescued in two flights.

Flooding blocked three main roads yesterday with the Highlands the worst affected by rain and high winds.

On the A82 Inverness to Fort William road, two landslides blocked the route at Letterfinlay and Part of the road surface was swept away. Flooding and subsidence also blocked the Locharron road and the Kyle road and serious floods were reported at the Loch Ness village of Fort Augustus.

But in North Wales, the weather was so mild that people sat in the sunshine on the sea front at Colwyn Bay.

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More than 1,200 search for Tidy kidnappers

By Our Labour Editor

More than 1,200 police and troops were drafted into Derrada wood, outside Ballinamore in Co Leitrim, yesterday in a final search for the kidnappers of Mr Don Tidy, aged 49, the chairman of the executive.

While police chiefs are conceding that the IRA kidnap squad has eluded the biggest security operation mounted in the Irish Republic, officers still believed that there might be vital forensic science evidence to be found.

Fingerprint experts were examining beer cans and tins of food found in the underground dugout where Mr Tidy was

held captive for 23 days. He was freed in a gunbattle 12 days ago in which a soldier and a police trainee died.

A police spokesman said last night: "We cannot afford to leave any stone unturned. Forensic science evidence could be vital in identifying the gang."

Meanwhile, Dr Garret Fitzgerald, Prime Minister of the Republic, is preparing for a Cabinet meeting next week at which overall security will be reviewed.

In the past two months, Dominic McIninchey, the INLA terrorist leader, has evaded capture three times.

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Prisoners protest over parole

By Our Labour Editor

Two prisoners are staging a rooftop protest at Long Lartin maximum security prison near Evesham, Hereford and Worcester. They climbed up on Monday with the help of other prisoners, and are huddled in a crude shelter on top of a water tower.

The men, Mark Leech, aged 26, who has served a year of a five-year sentence for theft and wounding with intent, and Stephen Robson, aged 25, jailed for nine years last June for robbery and possessing a firearm, are protesting at the Home Secretary's decision not to give parole to prisoners serving long sentences for violence.

Two prisoners who escaped from Stafford jail late on Monday, were recaptured in Madeley, Staffordshire, yesterday. Terry Kirk, aged 38, and Keith Lane, aged 19, had used sheets knotted together to scale the perimeter wall.

Kirk has served six months of a 57-month prison sentence for incest, burglary, and possessing a firearm. Lane had served three months of a two-year sentence for burglary.

Tories urge review of obscenity law

By Our Political Reporter

Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, is coming under fresh pressure from Conservative MPs to review the operation of the Obscene Publications Act.

MPs are complaining that the present obscenity law is resulting in insufficient convictions and is easy to evade.

It is pointed out that a situation has arisen in which, although the Government has given councils powers to close sex shops under local planning powers, equally offensive material can be bought over the

counter at other shops in some areas.

Mr Edward Taylor, Conservative MP for Southend East, said yesterday: "The Obscene Publications Act needs desperately to be reviewed. The definition of what is obscene needs to be more flexible because at present juries have to decide whether material is likely to deprave or corrupt, and that is the sticking point."

MPs plan to raise the issue at private meetings with Mr Brittan.

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Churches' plea on oil rig

By Our Labour Editor

The Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland appealed yesterday to British Shipbuilders and Britoil to avert the loss of more than 4,000 jobs at Scott Lithgow.

The Lower Clyde yard faces closure because of Britoil's cancellation of an £86m oil rig order.

The churches, in a joint statement, said: "For the sake of many thousands of people in the west of Scotland, we

earnestly request you to discuss urgently terms for the resumption of building exploration rig contract 3002 at Scott Lithgow."

Britoil cancelled the order last week. The rig should have been delivered next spring, but it is estimated to be up to 500 days behind schedule. British Shipbuilders said afterwards that it could not afford penalty payments.

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Moscow leads world shipping

By Michael Baily, Transport Editor

The Soviet Union has overtaken both Britain and the United States as a merchant shipping power on the world's oceans for the first time.

While Britain's fleet has been steadily declining since the mid-1970s the Soviet Union's has been forging ahead and the latest figures from Lloyd's Register of Shipping show 25 million tonnes under the Soviet flag, 19 million under the British and 19 million under the United States.

Ten years ago Britain had nearly twice as much merchant shipping as the Soviet Union, more than 30 million tonnes against 1 million - and two years ago Britain was still ahead with 25 million tonnes against the Soviet Union's 23 million.

But as the world shipping slump and low-cost competition from the East continue to take their toll, Britain's fleet has shrunk and it is expected to continue to do so for some years yet.

By 1990 the 1970s position could be reversed, with the Soviet Union operating a merchant fleet twice the size of the British: 30 million tonnes against 15 million.

Serious concern has been expressed by both shipping and defence chiefs over the growth of Soviet shipping at the expense of western shipping in recent years.

The Soviet Union claims its shipping expansion is modest, and geared to the growth in its own overseas trade and that of its friends.

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Scottish house prices 'set to rise'

By Our Labour Editor

House prices in Scotland are set to rise by between 5 per cent and 10 per cent in the next three months, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors says today.

But it gives a warning that there will be no price boom without a lasting upturn in the economy.

In its quarterly market report published today, a Scottish estate agents predict a repeat of last

year's rise in home purchases with buyers out in force before the new year holiday ends.

Estate agents say that building societies have plenty of funds and, although the prospect of a mortgage rate cut has been deferred, it has not been abandoned.

But last year's increase concealed wide fluctuations between areas and house types, with some properties increasing

by 20 per cent or more but others remaining static.

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Frigates cost £80m to refit

By Our Defence Correspondent

It is now costing £80m to modernise a Royal Navy frigate. This is only £20m less than the price at which the navy is hoping to build the first of its entirely new class of Type 23 frigates.

Facts given by Mr John Lee, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Defence Procurement, in a written answer in the Commons, show that the cost of a mid-life refit of a Leander class frigate has risen from about £20m for ships which completed their refit in 1980 to about £80m each for HMS Hermione and HMS Scylla which began their modernization programmes in that year, and complete them this month and in mid-1985 respectively.

This huge cost escalation adds point to the decision announced in June 1981 by Sir John Nott, then Defence Secretary, to end the practice of mid-life modernization. At that time he put the cost at £70m per ship.

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Graham sermon

By Our Labour Editor

The Queen has invited Dr Billy Graham, the US evangelist, to preach at Sandringham parish church on January 15, during the Royal Family's new year holiday on the estate. At least 10,000 people are expected to hear his sermon relayed by loudspeakers.

Overseas selling prices: Australia \$20, Belgium 2.80, Canada \$20, Denmark 120, France 120, Germany 120, Greece 120, Hong Kong 120, India 120, Italy 120, Japan 120, Korea 120, Malaysia 120, Mexico 120, New Zealand 120, Norway 120, Portugal 120, Singapore 120, South Africa 120, Spain 120, Sweden 120, Switzerland 120, Taiwan 120, Thailand 120, Turkey 120, USA 120, Yugoslavia 120.

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Labour may seek safeguard for Reuters

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

The Labour Party is to press for an examination by Parliament of the decision by directors of Reuters, the international news agency and financial information service, to float the company on the stock market next year.

One proposal being discussed within the party is that Reuters should be turned into a statutory corporation like the BBC to safeguard it against the risk of falling into undesirable or foreign hands.

The decision by Reuters on December 14 to seek a listing for its shares on the Stock Exchange came after lengthy arguments among the board members and opposition from Labour MPs, led by Mr James Callaghan, the former Prime Minister.

The company is thought to have a market value of more than £1,000m, and a floatation would bring big gains to Fleet Street newspaper groups, provincial newspapers, and newspapers in New Zealand and Australia.

Under the terms of the Reuters Trust agreement, the trustees are responsible for ensuring that it does not pass into the hands of any single interest or group, and that its integrity and freedom from bias are preserved.

Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney General, when questioned by the Commons last month, said that he had no responsibility to intervene.

Mr Bryan Gould, a Labour frontbench spokesman on trade and industry, said yesterday: "Now that the flotation may take place in the early months of 1984 it is important that Parliament should look at the issue urgently."

He said that the trust which had been formed to safeguard Reuters came about mainly as a result of parliamentary pressure. "Now we are told that the trust can be broken."

"This was regarded as a matter of extreme urgency in 1941. It is just as important now. That is why we may have to consider statutory protection for Reuters providing a framework similar to that provided for the BBC."

Mr Gould also called for a Commons debate on the concentration of ownership in the national and provincial press. "This concentration has shown that the various Acts to prevent monopolies and create conditions of fair trading are totally useless," he said.

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MP pre on hare

By Our Labour Editor

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Global takes more than £500,000 off 1984 holiday prices

By Robin Young

At the outset of the peak booking season for summer holidays, Global Holidays announced yesterday that it was reducing its brochure prices for next year by a total of more than £500,000. It has reprinted its brochure, with lower prices for holidays at 83 hotels in Spain, Italy, Portugal, and Greece.

The biggest saving offered is more than £100 a person for two weeks at a hotel in Majorca, but many holidays will be about £50 cheaper than last year's prices.

That is the latest move in a price-cutting war that began at the end of November when Thomson Holidays, the market leader, announced cuts of up to £56, an average of 10 per cent, on 750,000 of its one million foreign summer holidays for sale.

Intasun, the second largest company, delayed launching its brochure until December, and then announced an average of 9 per cent reductions on 500,000 holidays. Horizon, the third largest operator, followed suit.

Global has not previously revised its published brochure, but this year it restricted the initial print order in expectation of having to respond to price cuts announced by larger competitors.

Mr Roger Corkhill, managing

director of Global, had accused Thomson of provoking a price war in the battle for holiday bookings. Yesterday, he said that the strength of the pound against the Mediterranean currencies had helped to reduce prices, but that most of the difference would have to come out of profit margins. Global, which is the country's tenth biggest tour operator, hopes to sell 250,000 holidays this summer.

As with previously announced price revisions, holidaymakers who have already made their bookings will also benefit from the price reductions.

The travel industry is now fully committed to selling more than eight million foreign holidays this year, well up on previous totals.

Mr Richard Gabber, managing director of Pickfords Travel, which sells more Global Holidays than any other travel agents, said yesterday that overall bookings for foreign holidays next summer are up by a fifth on the same stage last year.

The late launch of the Intasun brochure caused a dip in sales in November, but in the four weeks before Christmas sales were almost half as many again as in the equivalent period last year.

"In the pattern of trade that has evolved this year," Mr Gabber said, "customers can book early in the knowledge that their chosen holiday can only get cheaper if there are further price cuts. This is a complete reversal on previous years when people were tempted to book early by low prices, and then companies levied surcharges to meet their costs. This has to be good news for everybody."

One large operator not to have revised its brochure prices is Cosmos, the fourth largest. Cosmos lost some of its share of the market last summer, but is felt to have produced a competitively priced brochure at the first attempt this year, offering many holidays in Italy and Spain where currency weaknesses bring the strongest price advantages.

A spokesman for Thomson said yesterday that the company would have sold 300,000 holidays by the end of this month, 50 per cent up on last year. "We expect the industry as a whole to sell a million extra foreign holidays this year. The fact that holidays are cheaper substantially due to stable fuel costs and the comparative strength of the pound."

"We expect our own bookings to be a quarter up on last year."

MP fears slide to random breath tests

By a Staff Reporter

A Conservative MP complained yesterday that the police had been "bouding" motorists during the Christmas holiday with unjustified breath tests.

Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark, MP for Birmingham, Selly Oak, said that he would ask the Government for the number of breath tests conducted by all police forces and for an assurance that they were not quietly moving towards random tests.

Parliament had rejected random tests, but some forces seemed to use pretexts unconnected with suspicion of drunken driving to stop motorists and test them. "I have a horrid suspicion that the police are enforcing their own law instead of Parliament's law," Mr Beaumont-Dark said.

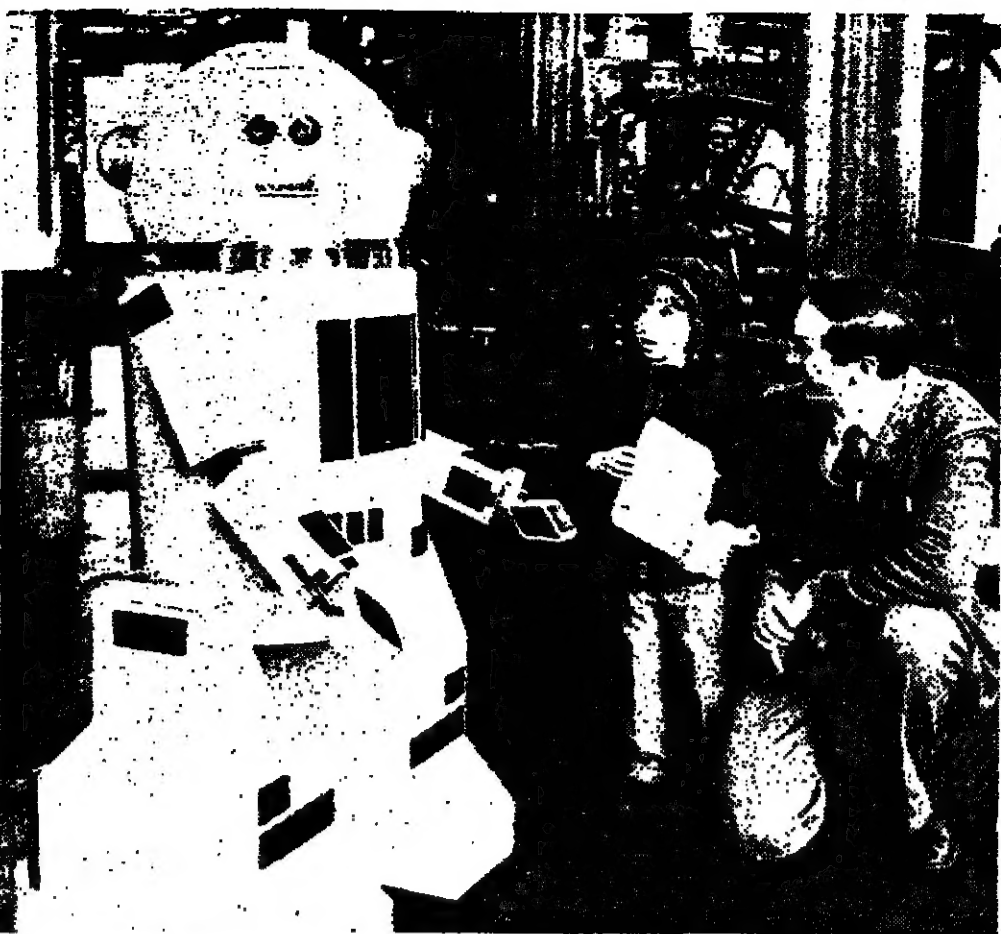
"I am not in favour of people drinking and driving, but I think we have been in a state this Christmas when most motorists have felt like hiding behind a hedge when a police car has come along."

Two people died and 16 were seriously injured in road accidents in Nottinghamshire during the Christmas holiday compared with four and 26 this time last year. Last year 1,700 breath tests were conducted in the county and 54 proved positive. This year there were 2,500 of which 46 were positive.

● The number of drivers who gave positive breath tests in Strathclyde region over the four days of the Christmas holidays almost doubled on last year's figures. A total of 88 drivers, of 130 tested, were found to be driving over the legal limit between December 23 and 26, compared with 49 positive last year.

Lothian and Borders police recorded 11 positive breath tests between December 24 and 26, compared with 28 positive tests last year. Tayside police recorded 11 positive tests compared with 20.

Mr Murphy, aged 46, is an



Walkie talkie: Samuel Woodward and his father meeting Denby, the walking, talking robot at the British Engineering in Hove, East Sussex, yesterday. Denby was part of the welcoming party at the museum's "in-steam" exhibition, which runs all this week (Photograph: Harry Kerr).

Waldorf detective back in uniform

By John Witherow

One of the detectives who shot and wounded Steven Waldorf in mistake for the fugitive gunman David Martin is being transferred to uniform duty.

Det Constable Peter Finch, aged 38, who was cleared at the Central Criminal Court of attempted murder, is to be transferred next month after spending almost a year on full pay.

It is unusual for a policeman to be transferred from detective to uniform work.

The decision was said to have been taken after senior police officers became concerned at the pressure Constable Finch came under as a result of the trial and an internal Scotland Yard inquiry. The pay for a uniformed police constable is the same as for a detective and the police were keen to emphasize that Constable Finch was not being demoted.

No decision has been taken about the future of Det Constable John Jardine, aged 38, who was also charged and cleared after the shooting.

Constable Finch, married with three children, of Croxley Green, Hertfordshire, joined the police as a cadet when he was 16 and had been a detective for eight years.

At the time of the shooting last January he was attached to Scotland Yard's C11 squad. He shot Mr Waldorf, whose car was stuck in traffic in west London, believing he was the escaped man David Martin and was reaching for a gun. The prosecution also alleged that Constable Finch had "pistol-whipped" Mr Waldorf as he lay wounded in the car.

Constable Finch was cleared of attempted murder on the direction of the judge, Mr Justice Croom-Johnson, and the jury later found him not guilty of wounding Mr Waldorf with intent to cause grievous bodily harm.

MP predicts ban on hare-coursing

From Our Correspondent, Belfast

A Unionist MP predicted yesterday that this weekend's hare-coursing meeting at Crebilly, Co Antrim, would be the last such event in Northern Ireland.

Mr Peter Robinson, Democratic Unionist deputy leader and MP for Belfast, East, made his forecast when he took his place with a hundred other demonstrators against hare-coursing yesterday. There were more than a thousand coursing supporters at the meeting.

The chances of the sport's being banned in Northern Ireland next year hinges on the respect with which the views of the Northern Ireland Assembly are regarded in London.

Some months ago the Assembly called unanimously for a ban, but it has no legislative powers and the Northern Ireland Office let the decision pass without any reaction.

The Assembly is due to debate a draft Order in Council incorporating changes in Ulster's wildlife conservation

laws, which will then go to Westminster to become law.

"This Wildlife Order will give those of us who oppose this barbaric sport the opportunity to put down an amendment which will ban hare-coursing from Northern Ireland I believe this will be the last such meet to be seen here," Mr Robinson said yesterday.

Cat savaged

A girl aged 16 watched foxhounds from a traditional Christmas meeting savage her pet cat to death in her back garden yesterday (the Press Association reports).

Janet Lydall and her family heard a noise in the garden of their home in Laccoc, Wiltshire, and as they went out, saw their black cat, Cassy, surrounded by baying hounds. Neighbours joined in attempts to drive the dogs clear, but although the cat was alive when rescued, she died within minutes.

Thatcher is 'Woman of the Year'

By a Staff Reporter

The Prime Minister has won the BBC "Woman of the Year" award for the second successive year.

She gained double the votes given to Mrs Joan Ruddock, chairman of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, who came second. But the BBC declined to give any detailed figures for the award, which will be broadcast on the Today programme on Radio 4 this morning.

Mr Bruce Kent, general secretary of CND, won the "Man of the Year" poll which was broadcast on the programme yesterday. He beat Mr Eddie Shaw, who has continued to publish his Messenger group of newspapers in the face of mass picketing.

Mother Teresa took third place in the "Woman of the Year" vote, with Princess Anne fourth, and the Princess of Wales fifth. Mrs Victoria Gillick, the campaigner against contraceptive pills being prescribed for girls under 16; Miss Helen John, a founder of the Greenham Common peace camp; Jane Torvill, the ice skater; Jo Durie, the tennis player; and Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth, of the Salvation Army, completed the top 10.

Lord Tonypan, the former Speaker of the Commons was third in the men's vote, with Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, fourth and Mr Lech Walesa, the Polish union leader, fifth.

The rest of the top 10 were: Mr Richard Noble, the world land speed record holder; Alex Higgins, the snooker player; Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence; Mr Kenneth Livingstone, the Greater London Council leader; and The Rev Richard Harris, Radio 4's Prayer for the Day contributor.

Votes were also cast for the pop singer Boy George and Mr Roy Tapping, the man who carried his severed arm half a mile after a hay baling accident.

Dogs unlimited

Police officers and farmers are searching for three or four dogs which attacked a flock of pregnant ewes, killing seven and injuring six in Wembdon, near Bridgwater, Somerset, on Christmas Day.

Students for recipe costing and stock control. Each faculty has standardized on a system which has a range of software to suit its work.

Mrs Crocker says that there is great incentive to get students to use micro across the curriculum since the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), which approves polytechnic courses, put out a policy document earlier this year saying that it wanted new technology incorporated into all courses.

"If we do not take note of the CNAA we will not get course approval in future," Mrs Crocker said. "But we are also competing for students and we hope they will want to come here because we are offering them modern technology. We cannot afford to stand still."

Headway still has to be made with a number of departments, notably modern languages, which is linked with European business and law, but the lawyers do have at their disposal the data base Lexis, a reference system for legal cases.

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Top marks: The Fiat Uno, Car of the Year 1984.

Uno voted numero one

By Clifford Webb, Motoring Correspondent

Fiat's new generation supermini, the Uno, has been voted Car of the Year 1984 by motoring journalists from 16 European countries. However, it was a close thing with only a few votes separating it from another supermini the Peugeot 205.

Austin Rover's Maestro came seventh of the 15 cars considered. The highest placed Japanese car was the Mazda 626 in fifth place.

The big surprise was the poor showing of the Mercedes 190, the German quality car group's first venture into the small to

medium sized saloon. It was fourth scoring 116 points compared with Uno's 346.

The Italian entry was awarded top marks by jurors from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Britain, Italy, and Norway.

The Citroën BX which was recently voted "Top Car 1984" by the British Guild of Motoring Writers and was hotly tipped for the European award because of its advanced technology, came sixth.

The last wholly British car to win the prestigious Car of the Year award was the Rover 3.500 in 1977.

The computer revolution

New age dawning in polys

By Lucy Hodges, Education Correspondent

The microcomputer age is dawning in higher education and it is happening, appropriately enough, in the polytechnics rather than the universities.

In the vanguard of this particular revolution is the Polytechnic of the South Bank in London which now has about 200 micro and four mainframe computers, to which are linked 200 to 300 terminals. All five faculties have computer laboratories.

The polytechnic, whose director, Mr John Beishon, has taken a strong interest in promoting the new technology, wants to introduce computers to all its students, whatever their subject, so that they have "hands on" experience of micro and understand their potential. Lecturers can call on the computer services department for help with equipment and the programs needed for it.

"We are trying to respond to industry and to student demand," Mrs Pat Crocker, head of the computer services department, said. "We are finding that students now have micros

at home and are quite familiar with them. They are also being recognized as a good teaching aid."

There are 11,000 part-time and full-time students at South Bank, spread over on three sites in the five faculties of administration, built environment (which includes architecture, town planning and civil engineering), engineering, science and technology and education/humanities/social sciences.

The engineers use the new technology more than any other faculty from the first year onwards — for example, to design circuit boards or test equipment. Mechanical engineers had been testing the effect of wind on items of equipment and readings had to be taken every second or so. This could be done much more accurately on the micro than manually.

Students of town planning use the technology to cost highway design, social scientists for survey analysis, business studies students for financial modelling and bakery

students for recipe costing and stock control. Each faculty has standardized on a system which has a range of software to suit its work.

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Armed Forces vying for privilege of sending Briton on space shuttle

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

Ministers are likely to decide within the next few months to send an astronaut up in the American space shuttle, who would be the first Briton to enter space.

There is intense rivalry among the Armed Services for the privilege but it is possible that a civilian would be chosen.

The Prime Minister, denied on December 13 in the Commons that there were any plans to send a British astronaut, but thinking within the Government, and particularly at the Ministry of Defence, seems to point in that direction.

The possibility of sending an astronaut arises because of the decision, announced on December 20, to use the American shuttle in preference to the European Ariane rocket for launching two military communications satellites, Skynet IV and B, in late 1985 and 1986.

The shuttle can carry up to 10 people, which includes scope for carrying two or three "payload specialists". They monitor specific pieces of equipment or the satellite launch for which the government or organization is paying.

It is in that role that a British astronaut would go. He or she would not need to be an aviator, or have super fitness required of that early astronaut.

In the case of the British payloads, it would be much more relevant for the person to be an expert in communications systems, specifically in the Skynet satellites.

The National Aeronautical and Space Administration said that it would probably need about a year's notice if Britain wanted to send up a payload specialist, who would require about two months training at

NASA, including "flights" on simulators.

Meanwhile, the Royal Navy, Army, and The Royal Air Force are believed to have prepared lists of candidates, backed with arguments on why the person should be selected from its ranks.

Scientists at Surrey University are racing to build their second experimental spacecraft in time for launch by NASA on March 1 (the Press Association reports).

They hope to assemble the £350,000 UOSAT-2 for testing next month and delivery in February.

The spacecraft, to be launched from the western test range in California, will carry scientific and engineering experiments for use by experts and radio amateurs, and experiments for schools and colleges.

Sugar beet crop sets factory records

The sugar beet harvest is expected to produce 1.1 million tonnes of sugar.

British Sugar, at Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, which handles crops from 14,000 growers, said yesterday that all 13 of its factories in the Midlands and East Anglia were operating at full capacity processing record amounts of beet.

Harvesting started in October after a two-week delay caused by the effects of a wet spring, which delayed drilling, and drought, which slowed summer root growth.

British Sugar said yesterday that 1983 "will be remembered as a year when the crop picked itself out of the doldrums and several factories set new weekly and daily slicing records". The factories are due to close by the end of next month.

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Equality case PC faces inquiry

Police Constable Trevor Atfield, of Hampton police station in West London, is to face an investigation for allegedly giving evidence in police court on behalf of a woman colleague who successfully brought a sex discrimination case against the Metropolitan Police.

PC Atfield says he cleared the time off with superiors before appearing at a tribunal on behalf of WPC Wendy de Launay.

Comedian's foot crushed

Jim Davidson, the comedian, cancelled shows at the Apollo Theatre, Coventry, last night after dropping a paving slab on his foot on Christmas Day.

The press agent, Miss Pat Lake-Smith, said Davidson almost lost a toe in the accident. A decision will be made today about whether he will appear in the rest of the shows.

Allay fears on ministry, church told

The Church of Scotland was urged today to make a "fresh and clear statement" of its procedures for selecting candidates for the ministry.

The call, in a leading article in the Church of Scotland magazine *Life and Work*, comes after the recent disclosures that a convicted killer and a former bank manager convicted of embezzlement have been accepted as candidates.

The magazine says that in these two "exceptional" cases the reasons why the men were accepted were given, but many prospective candidates who were rejected said that they were not given a reason.



Honeymoon couple: Steve Cram, the world 1,500 metres champion, and his wife, the former Miss Karen Waters, who were married 11 days ago, flew to the United States on their honeymoon yesterday.

The couple will spend about ten days in Tampa, Florida, before travelling to New Zealand, where Cram, aged 23, intends to spend two months training. On Friday, Cram was awarded the C. N. Jackson Memorial Cup, given by the Amateur Athletics Association to the year's most outstanding athlete.

The magazine says that in these two "exceptional" cases the reasons why the men were accepted were given, but many prospective candidates who were rejected said that they were not given a reason.

Vaccination campaigns

The 'trivial' disease that kills 900,000 a year

In the United States, measles have been almost completely wiped out. In Britain this year, there has been an epidemic involving more than 100,000 children. In the United States, vaccination against measles is compulsory. In this country, fewer than six in 10 children receive the vaccine.

Senior officials at the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) are concerned at the comparatively low uptake, and suspect that public apathy is largely responsible. Measles is seen as a trivial infection, with the cure being not much better than the disease, a fever and fleeting rash often follows inoculation.

Yet measles causes an average of 20 deaths a year in Britain. In a typical epidemic, 10,000 children in England alone would suffer complications, including deafness in 2,500 cases and partial deafness in 3,000 others.

The number of children vaccinated against measles in England last year was 368,512, only 20,000 more than in 1974. In 1978, the figure was as low as 302,075. Worldwide, measles

tetanus, poliomyelitis and diphtheria have virtually been eliminated from Britain, but measles still flourishes, helped by public apathy. Thomson Prentice concludes his series with a look at the statistical evidence that immunization campaigns really do work.

causes 900,000 deaths annually, mainly in Third World countries.

A study published early this year indicated that up to 4.5 million people in Britain are susceptible to the disease. The decision by the Princess of Wales last month to have Prince William inoculated against measles received less publicity than her endorsement of the national rubella campaign, but the DHSS was heartened by her move.

The Department hopes that more mothers will follow the Princess's example. The Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunization is trying to promote a greater public response.

The public's response to poliomyelitis, in contrast, has been dramatically positive. Fears of the disease have always outweighed any worries about

the risks of side-effects from the vaccine, calculated at one in three million. The uptake in England is now 82 per cent in 1981, 55,481 children were vaccinated.

Only four cases of paralytic poliomyelitis were reported last year. Two of those were vaccine-associated - one a child, the other a mother. In the third, the infection was acquired abroad; in the fourth, it was diagnosed in an infant boy who had a febrile illness.

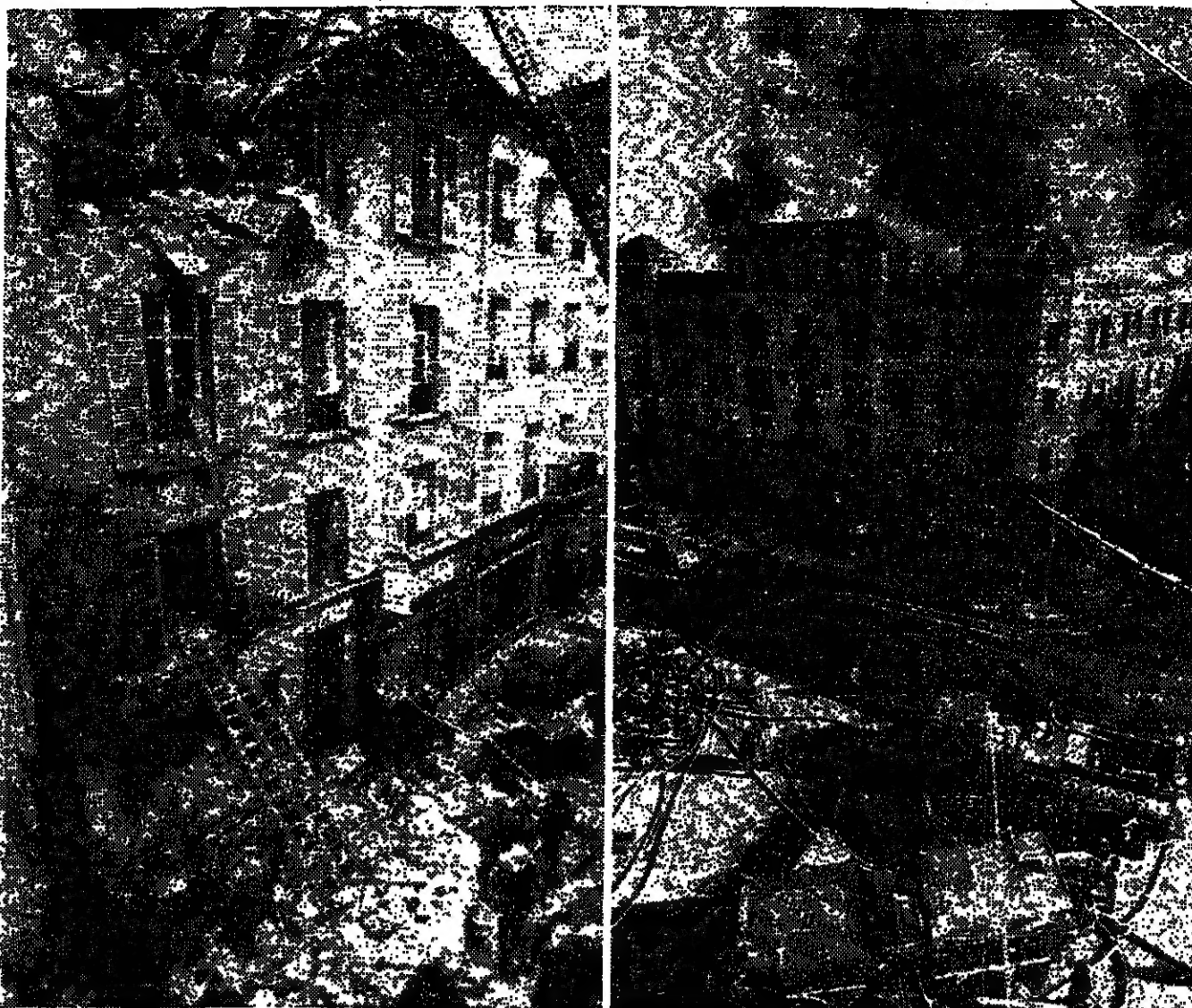
Polio has been virtually eliminated; so too has diphtheria. There were four cases in England in 1982, including that of a girl aged three who died in hospital. She had not been immunized. In the three previous years, there were only seven cases. The vaccination rate last year was 84 per cent.

Tetanus is another infection almost completely defeated by

vaccination. The vaccine is usually combined with those for whooping cough and diphtheria, and administered in the same injection. However, a version excluding whooping cough is also available, explaining why tetanus and diphtheria share an 84 per cent uptake while whooping cough remains at just 53 per cent.

But people aged over 65, who were too old to be immunized in the first wave of vaccinations, remain at risk from tetanus. Between five and 10 tetanus deaths are recorded in England every year, almost all involving people of that age group.

The usual timetable for immunizations is: Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio: from age three months; again at five to six months; and again at nine to 11 months. Measles: from 12 to 24 months. Boosters for diphtheria, tetanus and polio: at about five years of age. Rubella, or German measles: girls aged 10 to 14. Tuberculosis: girls and boys aged about 13 years. Tetanus and polio: when leaving school, aged between 15 and 19. Concluded



Black holiday: In Paris yesterday (left), where a woman was killed and three other people injured when a gas explosion wrecked a three-storey building; and in New York, where 10 people were hurt in a hotel fire

Nakasone defends choice of Tanaka backers

From Richard Hanson, Tokyo

Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone, the Japanese Prime Minister, yesterday defended his selection of six members of the Tanaka faction in his new Cabinet.

At a nationally televised press conference, Mr Nakasone denied that Mr Tanaka, the former Prime Minister, had ever meddled in the political affairs of his previous government. He said reports of such activity in the press had been misleading to voters in the election campaign.

The Tanaka issue appears to have been responsible for the sharply decreased vote for the ruling Liberal Democracy Party. Mr Tanaka is appealing against his conviction and four-year jail sentence in the Lockheed bribery scandal.

Explaining his selection of so many Tanaka followers in his 20-man Cabinet - by far the strongest representation - Mr Nakasone said: "It doesn't make sense to deprive qualified people (of posts) just because

they belong to Tanaka's group."

Reflecting his reading of public opinion, however, Mr Nakasone eased Tanaka men out of previous held sensitive posts such as Secretary-General of the party, Chief Cabinet Secretary and Justice Minister.

For the first time since the LDP came to power in 1955 the

Cabinet also includes an opposition party member, the leader of the National Liberal Club

whose alliance with the LDP gave Mr Nakasone enough votes to control the critical budget committee, though still below the LDP's absolute majority of 286 seats held before the election.



Nakasone's team: left, Mr Hikosaburo Okonogi (International Trade and Industry); centre, Mr Shintaro Abe (Foreign); and Mr Yuko Kurihara (Defence).

Rare public appearance by Mao's daughter

Peking (Reuters) - Mao Tse-tung's disgraced successor as Communist Party leader, Mr Hua Guofeng, has made a rare public appearance together with Mao's daughter by his jailed wife, Jiang Qing, the People's Daily reported.

The party newspaper said the two paid their respects in Mao's remains in the central Peking mausoleum on Monday as part of ceremonies marking the nineteenth anniversary of his birth.

According to the Hongkong magazine, *Zhongguo*, Mr Hua recently tried to commit suicide.

He was forced to resign in June, 1981, after his policies were attacked as too leftist. He was succeeded by Mr Hu Yaobang whose views are more in line with those of Mr Deng Xiaoping, a sworn enemy of Maoist dogmatism.

Mr Deng and his associates have stripped Mr Hua of most of his power. The *People's Daily* named Mao's daughter, Li Na, as among family members who paid homage to his remains in their crystal sarcophagus. It did not mention that she is the only child of Jiang Qing who was given a suspended death sentence in 1981 for conspiring to usurp state power as leader of the Gang of Four.

Li Na, aged about 40, wielded enormous power at the height of the Cultural Revolution in 1967 when she was chief editor of the *Liberation Army Daily*. The position was of particular importance because the army newspaper had at that time replaced the *People's Daily* as the mouthpiece of the Central Committee.

Warsaw hesitates over food price rise

From Roger Boyes, Warsaw

Food price rises, traditionally the most sensitive and volatile issue in Polish politics, may be postponed beyond the scheduled date of January 1 while the Government draws up a palatable package for the nation, economic experts and Communist Party officials have disclosed.

Since November the Government has been "consulting" the nation on whether it approves an increase in prices that would entail a 4.5 per cent increase in living standards or a 6.5 per cent rise. The idea is to reduce subsidies given to food, change consumption habits so that people eat food that is not dependent on imports and - though this is officially denied - to soak up surplus zloties on the market.

Government leaders have admitted that the response to food price rises of any kind is overwhelmingly negative. Some 40,000 letters have been received by the Council of Ministers' office, many complaining about the effect of the rises on fixed income households such as pensioners.

There have been angry scenes in factory meetings to discuss the rises. Representatives of Communist Party cells in 200 of the principal plants have warned the leadership that the increases will bring trouble in industry.

The Consultative Economic Council, a group of economists advising the Government, has recommended that a much milder form of increase be introduced and that the increases should be phased in slowly.

The Government is evidently taking some of these criticisms seriously. First, say party sources, an automatic increase in food prices on January 1 would be bad propaganda, giving the population the impression that the leadership had not taken sufficient account of the "consultations".

Second, the Government seems set to pick the mildest of the price rises and even then to exclude certain food products. Finally, at least some politicians within the Government are advising a more phased approach.

The results of the popular soundings - made through the new pro-Government trades unions and other organizations - will be published early next month.

Local polls begin Ershad's return to democracy

Dhaka (Reuters) - Voting began yesterday in rural council in Bangladesh, the first such elections in seven years.

General Hossain Mohammad Ershad the military ruler, said the elections would lay the foundations for a return to democracy.

Voting will continue until January 10, followed by municipal elections in urban areas on February 11 and sub-district council elections on March 24. Opponents of General Ershad

are against plans to hold a presidential election on May 24 and parliamentary polls later, on November 25. They say that a presidential election held beforehand would help General Ershad to install himself permanently as President.

General Ershad seized power in 1982, and named himself President this month after anti-government violence.

Five of 12 Soviet diplomats expelled from Bangladesh left the country on Monday official sources said yesterday.

EEC presidency changes hands

Mitterrand versus Thatcher

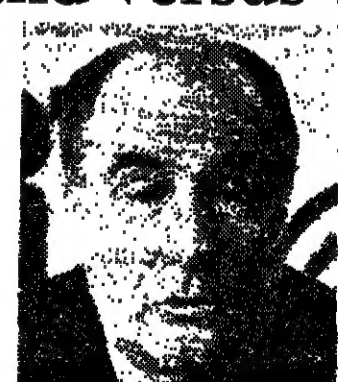
France begins its six-month term as president of the EEC's Council of Ministers with the new year. In this second article on the crisis in the EEC, Ian Murray, looks at how French domestic pressures could make the Community's problems even more difficult to solve.

"Europe is fully aware that it is in crisis." That was President Mitterrand's optimistic summary of the outcome of the Athens summit when he refused to answer any press questions on the ground that he was about to take over the presidency of the EEC.

It was an optimistic comment because the EEC member states have so far given precious little practical indication that they are aware of any internal crisis. Even though the European Commission was forced to freeze some payments from October in order to eke out the 1983 budget, the summit failed to grasp that the money was running out so quickly that something had to be agreed urgently.

As a result the towering 900,000-tonne surplus butter mountain continues to grow, French and West German farmers go on snarling at each other about "green" currency rates, and the poisonous British budget problem is beginning to infect the entire body politic of the Community.

But the crisis has yet to come because there is still enough money to go round and, unless the British withhold payment of all or part of its contributions, there will be enough money to go round throughout the French presidency.



President Mitterrand: taking over negotiations himself

It remains an open question whether enough countries will perceive the crisis before the cash runs out in order to summon up the so-called "political will" to do something about it.

Should they do so then President Mitterrand could preside over the creation of the "second generation Europe" which Brussels visionaries have been looking towards anxiously for some time. Should the crisis be reached then President Mitterrand will have a handy scapegoat in Mrs Thatcher.

The next six months look like being a classic encounter between the irresistible force of Mrs Thatcher's arguments and the immovable objections of President Mitterrand. Mrs Thatcher actually looked forward in Athens to the crisis ahead as being the one certain way of bringing everyone else to their senses. President Mitterrand, too, looked forward to it as providing the catalyst for decisions.

In Athens he also showed that he intends to take over control of the negotiations from his ministers. It was he who threw the ultimate spanner in the barely moving works of the

summit by offering Mrs Thatcher another short-term budget deal, and by refusing to discuss binding controls on spending - both ideas accepted by French ministers in earlier meetings.

French officials involved in the negotiations admitted privately that they had been as amazed as the British by the way in which the President seemed to ignore all that had gone before.

Mitterrand has also underlined his intention of staying in control by his appointment of a close personal friend, M. Roland Dumas, as Minister for European Affairs. His chief qualification for the job would seem to be that he has the ear of the President.

Giving in to Mrs Thatcher would cost President Mitterrand dear. He made a great deal of political capital in opposition by accusing his predecessor, M. Ciscard D'Estaing, of giving way when the first British deal was struck in 1980. It would be difficult for him not to lose a great deal of face if he followed suit.

Equally, he cannot risk the unpopularity that would follow any large-scale reform of the common agricultural policy in which French farmers would lose income. They are already facing a zero price increase this year, and their tempers are notoriously short in these circumstances.

Given all this, the French President is unlikely to be conciliatory in the chair, unless he believes that success can win him votes. While individual ministers will be urged to make progress on their complicated dossiers, President Mitterrand can be expected to oversee everything with the 1986 French elections in mind.

Tomorrow: Britain holds the key

Law Report December 28, 1983

What the signature of a company is

UBAF Ltd v European American Banking Corporation
Before Lord Justice Ackner and Lord Justice Oliver
[Judgment delivered December 9]

The signature on behalf of a company of its duly authorized agent acting within the scope of his authority was the signature of the company for the purpose of section 6 of the Statute of Frauds Amendment Act 1828.

Further, it was a matter of evidence whether the plaintiff's cause of action accrued when they entered into a contract as a result of innocent but negligent misrepresentation, since it was not inevitable that they had entered into the contract merely by entering into the contract.

The Court of Appeal so held when allowing an appeal by the appellants, UBAF Ltd, from an order by Mr Justice Leggatt who set aside an order of Mr Justice Staughton who had given leave to serve a writ on the defendants, European American Banking Corporation, out of the jurisdiction.

Mr Kenneth Robinson QC and Mr Timothy Charlton for the appellants; Mr Leonard Hoffmann QC and Mr Richard Sillery for the respondent defendants.

LORD JUSTICE ACKNER, giving the judgment of the court, said that the plaintiffs were an English banking corporation and the defendants were a New York banking corporation.

The defendants approached the plaintiffs and requested them to participate in two loans which the defendants were intending to make to two Panamanian corporations in the Colocotronis group of shipping companies.

A letter signed by the defendant's assistant secretary was sent to the plaintiffs together with information about the loans. The plaintiffs alleged that the defendants represented to them that the intended loans were "attractive financing of two companies in a sound and profitable group" and in reliance on those representations the plaintiffs lent US\$300,000 to each company.

The Colocotronis group got into difficulties and the two companies defaulted and \$880,000 remained

outstanding. The plaintiffs brought a claim pleading three separate causes of action: deceit, misrepresentation under section 2(1) of the Misrepresentation Act 1967 and negligence in the presentation of the transactions.

The defendants contended that the claim in deceit, was precluded by section 6 of the Statute of Frauds Amendment Act 1828 (Lea Tenderden's Act), which equally ruled out any claim under the Misrepresentation Act 1967. They also contended that any claim in negligence was statute barred because the writ was issued more than six years after the cause of action (if any) arose.

Section 6 of Lord Tenderden's Act provided: "no action shall be brought whereby to charge any person upon or by reason of any representation or assurance made or given concerning or relating to the signature of the party to be charged, unless it was accepted by any other person, to the intent or purpose that such other person may obtain credit, money or goods upon, unless such representation or assurance be made in writing signed by the party to be charged therewith."

It was common ground that the action applied to fraudulent misrepresentations only; and that "person" in the section included a corporation.

The matter at issue was whether the signature of the defendant's assistant secretary constituted the signature of the party to be charged. Once it was accepted that the section applied to a corporation, the signature of some person must be sufficient for the purposes of the Act. The court did not know any detail concerning the terms of the assistant secretary's actual authority or what his status was in the defendant company.

Evidence was therefore required to determine the issue and accordingly the matter had to be allowed to proceed.

Further, having considered *Hirsh v West Riding Union Bank Ltd* (1902) 2 KB 560 and *Swift v Jewsbury* (1874) LR 9 QB 301, his Lordship found that there was no impediment in authority in deciding, and it should now be decided, that the signature on behalf of a

company of its duly authorized agent acting within the scope of his authority was, for the purposes of section 6 of Lord Tenderden's Act, the signature of the company.

The defendants successfully contended before Mr Justice Leggatt that the accrual of the cause of action occurred when the plaintiffs parted with their money and acquired instead claims for repayment of money lent against borrowers whose ability to repay was, contrary to the alleged representations, a matter of considerable doubt.

The short answer to that question depended upon the facts as found at the trial. The plaintiffs case was that if they had known the respects in which the representations were inaccurate, they would not have entered into the contracts.

Accordingly, the defendants argued that at the very moment of entering into that contract the plaintiffs must have suffered damage.

That bare proposition was not self evident. The plaintiffs were suing in the tort of negligence. To establish a cause of action they had to establish not only a breach of duty but that that breach of duty occasioned them damage. That was automatic.

It was possible that at the date when the plaintiffs advanced their money the value of the chose in action which they then acquired was in fact not less than the sum which the plaintiffs lent, or indeed even exceeded it.

That had to depend on the evidence. The mere fact that the innocent but negligent misrepresentations caused the plaintiffs to enter into a contract which they otherwise would not have entered into, did not inevitably mean that they had suffered damage by merely entering into the contract.

Even if it was wrong to conclude that evidence was required to establish whether or not the plaintiffs alleged cause of action accrued when the loan was advanced, there was a further matter to consider.

The plaintiffs sought to rely on section 32(1)(b) of the Limitation Act 1980 on the basis that the falsity of the representations was known to

the defendants and that the relevant facts were concealed.

The plaintiffs entered into a transaction of contributing to a syndicate loan where the defendants were acting in a fiduciary duty for all the other participants.

If, therefore, it was within the defendants' knowledge at any time while they were carrying on their fiduciary duties that the security was inadequate, it must have been their duty to inform the participants and their continued failure to do so would constitute a continuing breach of their fiduciary duty.

The validity of a claim to rely upon section 32(1)(b) depended on the evidence and could only be decided at trial.

The application could be allowed and the summons to set aside service of the writ dismissed.

Solicitors: Clifford-Turner, Freshfields.

Chastisement must be controlled

Regina v Taylor

Although it was a schoolmaster's right and duty to control and, if necessary, chastise pupils in his care, he must act reasonably. Whether force used was reasonable was a matter for a jury, but reasonable chastisement involved a controlled, if not an entirely cool response and the throwing of an exercise book at a pupil could not come within that category.

Mr Justice Nolan (sitting with Lord Justice May and Mr Justice Boreham) so held on December 19 when the Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal by a teacher, Martyn Taylor, against his conviction on June 22, 1982 at Bristol Crown Court (Mr Recorder Dr Llewellyn, QC and a jury) of assault occasioning actual bodily harm to a 12-year-old pupil.

Correction
In *Grainy Morning Services Ltd v Interlego AG and Another*, *The Times*, December 19, 1983, solicitors for the plaintiffs were Philip Conn & Co, Manchester.

Israel resolves to stamp out stone-throwing in West Bank

From Christopher Walker, Bethlehem

The Israeli Government is considering new measures to deter Palestinian stone-throwing, including the demolition of houses and other buildings near main roads used by Jewish vehicles, and deportation for those found guilty of inciting the attacks.

Both options are available to the military authorities under draconian security regulations originally drafted by the British in 1945 and still in force in the occupied West Bank.

The probability of their rapid introduction was disclosed yesterday by Mr Moshe Arens, the Defence Minister, during a visit to two of the largest West Bank refugee camps, Balata near Nablus and Dheisheh outside Bethlehem.

While soldiers and security men with sub-machine guns kept the hostile camp residents at a safe distance, Mr Arens conferred with senior officers about the new measures, after the recent increase in attacks on Jewish settlers. At no time did he make any effort to enter the warren of alleys and narrow streets in the camp.

Dheisheh, a sprawling eyecore, which houses about 10,000 refugees, is on the main road linking the holy cities of Jerusalem and Hebron and has been the scene of repeated attacks on Jews travelling to and from the large settlement of Kiryat Arba. The authorities have responded with curfews and by blocking roads in the camp.

Standing alongside used car tyres, Mr Arens was asked what was being

considered. "We are looking at the possibility of deportation as a possible measure of punishment in addition to those punishments that exist," he said. It was stressed that this would not necessarily apply to young stone-throwers, whom he referred to as "hooligans", but to those who incited them.

On the question of the demolition of houses and schools built close to the road, Mr Arens said: "That is certainly an approach we are looking at. It is a common one when it comes to road safety, to make sure that there is space between roads and the area where people move or live. To the extent that this is possible for us, this is the correct way to go."

Camp residents, whose walls are covered in painted-over Palestinian slogans, expressed anxiety about the proposed measures. Many fear that the Israelis plan to move the entire camp under a scheme for resettling the Palestinians being considered by the Cabinet. But Mr Arens denied his unexpected trip had anything to do with that.

His hard-line approach was in stark contrast to remarks made by Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Prime Minister, earlier this month when he played down the importance of stone-throwing and told settlers that no switch in security policy was required.

The proposals are likely to be criticized by the US State Department which wants to improve the quality of life of the 800,000 Palestinians in the West Bank.



Anniversary march: Afghan exiles demonstrating outside the Soviet Embassy in Bayswater Road, London, yesterday, to mark the fourth anniversary of the Russian intervention in Afghanistan (Photograph: Bill Warhurst).

EEC in Afghan anniversary appeal to Russia

By Rodney Cowton, Defence Correspondent

Britain and other members of the European Economic Community yesterday marked the fourth anniversary of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan by denouncing the continued presence there of Soviet troops and calling for their withdrawal.

A statement issued from Athens on behalf of the 10 member states of the EEC said they remained deeply concerned at continuation of the occupation and by the violation of the independence of Afghanistan.

It called on the Soviet Union urgently to withdraw its troops, and said the countries were ready to support any constructive initiative aimed at finding a lasting and principled solution to the problem.

On behalf of Britain alone, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, issued a strong but similar statement, which referred to the "brutal and relentless war" waged by the Soviet Union, and called on the Russians "to honour their international obligations under the UN Charter, and to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan".

He said that since the invasion at Christmas, 1979, "countless villages have been destroyed together with their crops and irrigation systems. Tens of thousands of Afghans have been killed or injured in indiscriminate and violent attacks. Literally millions have been driven abroad as refugees."

"In Kabul the Karmal regime, 'totally dependent on Soviet power for its survival' pursues a vicious policy of political repression, imprisonment and torture."

The spirit of the Afghan people remained unbroken.

More than 100,000 Soviet troops had failed to suppress the resistance to the occupation. Despite their appalling suffering the Afghan people remained determined to defend their way of life and to regain their independence.

In a communique issued from Bonn Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the West German Foreign Minister, said that blood continued to be shed and no end was in sight.

● ISLAMABAD: Afghanistan yesterday renewed its offer to send home the 105,000 Soviet troops, but a key resistance

leader vowed that the rebels would fight until they drove the Russians out (Reuter reports).

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar of the fundamentalist Hezb-I-Islami Party, and vice-president of the seven-party alliance based in Pakistan, rejected any political settlement with the Soviet Union and accused Moscow of trying to deceive the world with its proposal for a negotiated settlement.

The Afghan offer, in a Radio Kabul broadcast, included a demand for international guarantees that all resistance would stop.

Ailing economy reels as unions get tough

From Our Own Correspondent, Jerusalem

With inflation approaching 200 per cent, Israel is facing an unparalleled wave of labour unrest which yesterday grew more serious when postal workers began an indefinite strike which crippled services and posed a new threat to the ailing economy.

Further public services are expected to be hit as trade unionists step up their campaign against the Government's declared intention of cutting real wages by 10 per cent and reducing the standard of living in an effort to reduce the country from its balance-of-payments crisis. Already this week, violence has erupted at one workers' protest march near the Red Sea port of Eilat and in Jerusalem, an angry crowd of 1,000 organized by the Israeli equivalent of the Trades Union Congress, paralysed traffic as it marched through the street, chanting "bread and work".

The violence in Eilat flared when about 150 men protested against the proposed closure of a local copper mine near the site of the historical mines of King Solomon. Tear gas was used to break up the demonstration and one policeman and two demonstrators were injured.

The bulk of the industrial unrest has so far been in the public sector which faces a 3 per cent manpower cut under budget plans to be presented to the Cabinet by Mr Yigal Cohen-Orad, the Finance Minister. He is also seeking overall spending cuts of about £1,000m.

In addition to the postal strike, the Government faces other protests. These were yesterday reported to be imminent in the agriculture and transport ministries, the meteorological office, local government offices and the customs and excise department.

On Monday night, Mr Asher Ohayon, the director-general of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, gave warning that the ministry's institutions, which serve 100,000 Israelis, were on the verge of catastrophe as a result of wage demands. He

said the system would begin collapsing later this week.

The Government's determination to rescue Israel from economic crisis by the most stringent belt-tightening measures since the right-wing Likud coalition won power in 1977 has brought an angry reaction from its grass roots.

This discontent - which could have severe political consequences - came to the fore at a meeting in Tel Aviv of the coalition's dominant Herut Party. Mr David Levi, the Deputy Prime Minister, was subjected to scathing criticism of the Government's economic plans.

Many of the attacks came from oriental Jews from the poorer towns - the group which put the Likud in power and has since maintained it there. Mr Shalom Ovish from Mr Levi's home town of Beit Shean claimed that in every development town "what is now missing is only the person who will strike the match to set the blaze".

Mr Ovish asked: "How much longer will dozens of unemployed youngsters walk around idle? It is the public which gave you the mandate to run the state. This government does not realize who it is hurting."

At the social unrest gathers momentum, Mr Shimon Peres, the leader of the main Labour opposition, last week held meetings with Mr Ezer Weizman, the former Defence Minister and Mr Yitzhak Modai, the Energy Minister. This rekindled speculation about possible moves for an early election or an attempt to replace the Government inside the present Knesset.

Interviewed on Israel television, Mr Peres - whose party has taken the lead in recent opinion polls - said: "I am sorry to say we have not yet hit bottom economically and it will take some time, maybe a month or two, before people are convinced that there is simply no other option than a change of government."

Breakthrough for Brazilian plane

From Patrick Knight, São Paulo

Brazil's Embraer Aircraft Company is to sell 120 of its two-seater Tucano trainer planes to Egypt in a contract worth \$180m (£120m). The first 40 will be delivered next year in assembled form; the remaining 80 are to be supplied as kits, to be assembled in Egypt during the subsequent three years.

Some of them may be sold to other Arab countries.

Embraer is also a contender for supplying the Tucano to the Royal Air Force, which will soon need 300 new trainers. The Tucano flies at 280 mph, and can carry two 120-kilo bombs, and machine-guns.

Embraer has also now gained its first firm orders for ten of the new 30-seater Brasília feeder aircraft from a Boston airline. More than 100 options on the new plane have been taken out.

Embraer hopes that the Brasília, to cost \$4.5m (£3.1m), will repeat the success of the 18-seater Bandeirante, of which 450 have been sold in the past

seven years, 230 of them abroad, including several to Britain. However, the Bandeirante had almost no competitors when it first appeared, and there will be four planes to compete with the Brasília.

● Antarctic trip: Brazil's second expedition to the Antarctic will leave for a ten weeks' voyage on January 6. Since its first expedition early this year, Brazil has been admitted as a full member of the now 16-strong Antarctic Consultative Committee.

Despite its economic difficulties, it has decided it must make an estimated annual outlay of at least \$25m on its research programme, so as to qualify to take part in the next meetings to discuss the future of the continent, due in 1991.

However, it is not proposing to make a territorial claim for any part of Antarctica, unlike neighbouring Argentina or Chile, parts of whose claims overlap and others such as Britain and Norway.



Happy couple: An official photograph of Princess Caroline of Monaco and her fiancé, Signor de Stefano Casiraghi.

El Salvador says 200 rebels killed by Army

San Salvador (Reuters) - The Salvadoran Army has killed more than 250 left-wing guerrillas during a two-week operation in the north east of the country, more than 50 of them in fighting at the weekend, the area commander said.

Many more guerrillas were wounded in the latest infantry and air operation near the village of Sesor, the commander told Reuters by telephone from his headquarters in San Miguel, 70 miles east of here.

He said troops had intercepted groups of guerrillas retreating from fighting in nearby Ciudad Barrios, 65 miles north-east of the capital.

Radio Venceremos, the guerrillas' radio, has said more than 300 soldiers and 15 guerrillas have died during the Army push involving 2,000 troops. The rebels rarely admit casualties.

The Army operation was launched after guerrillas briefly took a strategic communications post on December 13. Radio Venceremos has accused the US-backed Army of indiscriminate bombing of villages during the operation.

Following similar accusations by Radio Venceremos in the first week of battle, a Reuters correspondent in Ciudad Barrios saw no signs of bombing and residents said fighting had taken place outside the village. But military sources said the Army counts as guerrillas the often unarmed "camp followers" carrying food and ammunition.

Villagers go to war with Rhine Army

From Michael Binyon, Bonn

The 8,000 inhabitants of the little village of Augustdorf in Lower Saxony have declared war on the British Army of the Rhine, and are preparing "active resistance" to the Army's plans to build a concrete mock village near by in which to practise anti-guerrilla warfare.

The Army wants to erect a complex of 90 houses on the Senneleger training ground where troops will be able to engage in mock battles and house-to-house fighting. But the proposed ghost village, landscaped to blend in with local architecture, will be only 300 yards from the nearest house of the real village of Augustdorf, whose inhabitants are already up in arms over the continuous bursts of gunfire from the shooting ranges.

At a meeting just before Christmas, the local council voted unanimously to try to halt construction of the village, due to start early next year, and threatened to march into the closed training area and sit down in protest. They have already sent letters to the British Ambassador in Bonn

and to Herr Manfred Werner, the defence Minister, asking them to intervene.

There is little the villagers can do, however, as the training area is governed by a military agreement between Britain and West Germany. The Rhine Army insists, that the mock village, which will include two-storey houses, farmhouses and several "strategic" public buildings, is needed to give its troops, as well as Dutch and West German forces, practice in street fighting which it says, will be essential in repelling a conventional attack on West Germany.

Herr Adolf Steffen, the council director, said Augustdorf had been complaining about the noise from the range for the past 10 years, windows had been broken by vibration and school pupils had to sit in the middle of classrooms for fear of glass shattering.

The Army says it has given proper notice and gone through the right channels.

The inhabitants of Augustdorf, however, says there has been no real consultation.

Flick group must repay £112m taxes

From Our Own Correspondent, Bonn

The Flick group of companies, accused of bribing Otto Graf Lambsdorff, the Economics Minister, in return for tax concessions on the sale of shares, must repay around DM450m (£112m) in back taxes, according to reliable reports here.

The Düsseldorf-based conglomerate sold shares in Daimler-Benz in 1976 and 1978, and used much of the proceeds to invest in the Grace company in the United States. Flick claimed 31 per cent tax relief on this reinvestment on the grounds that it was of national economic benefit.

The Bonn public prosecutor maintains that the Economics Ministry agreed to the concession because substantial payments for party funds were given by Flick to Count Lambsdorff, the Minister, and to his predecessor.

Foreign office invites policy group to put case

Leaders of the right-wing Adam Smith Research Institute are being invited to the Foreign Office to discuss details of their report urging a new approach to British foreign policy. A Foreign Office spokesman said yesterday: "We are always interested in proposals seeking to establish better ways of formulating foreign policy."

However it seems unlikely that the main conclusion of the report - that Britain should have a national security council - will be adopted. Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, was sceptical about the idea when he spoke to a private meeting of Conservative backbenchers

Iraqi held for bombing in Kuwait

Kuwait (AP) - An Iraqi wanted in connexion with the December 12 bomb attacks here against the US and French embassies and other targets has been arrested. A government spokesman said 19 suspects are now in custody.

Previously, Kuwait had said that 12 people, including a man who died in a suicide attack against the US Embassy, were responsible. All of the initial suspects are identified as members of an underground Iraqi-based party with allegiance to Iran.

Sweden shops in the dark

Stockholm (AP) - A power failure struck Sweden and parts of Denmark, stopping trains and underground travel in Stockholm and darkening stories filled with post-Christmas shoppers in three of Sweden's largest cities.

Police accused

Lima, Peru (AP) - Two high-ranking prison officials and seven police officers have been ordered to stand trial for negligent homicide in the death of a Belfast-born nun Sister Joan Sawyer, aged 51, killed by police bullets while held hostage during an attempted prison break. Eight convicts also died.

Kidnap foiled

Rome (AP) - Five people suspected of planning to abduct a Rome countess on Christmas Day were arrested after police discovered a 9ft deep underground "prison" where they intended to hold her.

Pilot rescued

Copenhagen (AP) - Simon Willbourne, aged 32, of Somerset, Somerset, spent 13 minutes in icy water near Copenhagen airport after he ditched a twin-engine aircraft in the sea. He was rescued by helicopter.

Arm sewn on

Cape Town (AP) - A Dutch seaman was in satisfactory condition after doctors reattached his severed right arm and his partially severed right leg on Christmas Eve. He was injured in an accident on board his ship.

Sabena strike

Russels (AP) - Staff of the Belgian airline Sabena went on strike again for one day, after unanimously rejecting a draft agreement reached last week between management and unions. All except early flights were cancelled.

Rail toll rises

Harrare (Reuters) - The death toll in Zimbabwe's worst railway accident, a Christmas Eve derailment near the coal mining town of Bulawayo, rose to 34 when three more bodies were found in the wreckage.

Burglar, aged 7

Liege (AP) - A seven-year-old gypsy boy who entered a house at night after breaking a window was arrested in possession of stolen jewelry. Several houses in the area were burgled recently.

Paris denies Lebanon pullout

From Our Correspondent, Paris

The French Defence Ministry last night firmly denied speculation in Paris that the Government is preparing to withdraw its troops from the multinational peacekeeping force in Lebanon. "Absolutely not," a ministry spokesman said. "It is out of the question."

The speculation was fuelled when French units left the Palestinian refugee camps at Sabra and Chatila on Christmas Eve, thereby provoking violent clashes between the Lebanese Army and Shia and Druze militias. But the Ministry said yesterday that the withdrawal indicated no change of policy, "only a redeployment for security and tactical reasons".

Rumours that France was changing its policy were reported by several French papers, including the left-wing *Libération*, and picked up by international news agencies. Since France joined the multinational force in 1982, 82 of its soldiers have been killed and 96 injured.



M Charles Henux New Year in Chad

rumours by declaring that French policy remained unchanged. He then flew to Beirut to spend the Christmas with the French contingent and discuss security and tactics with commanders.

France has 2,000 soldiers in the multinational group, another 1,000 with the United Nations peacekeeping force. They are supported by the aircraft carrier *Clemenceau*, which is patrolling the Lebanese coast. Its aircraft include 16 Super-Etendards

M Henux will fly on Saturday to Chad to spend New Year with French troops there. The garrison of 2,800 went to Chad last summer to stiffen Government resistance to rebel forces backed by Libya. French commanders in Chad can also call upon troops stationed in the neighbouring Central African Republic.

France's Socialist Government has made few changes in the network of cooperation and military assistance agreements with former colonies around the world. Some 4,500 French troops are in Polynesia, 3,000 in New Guinea and 7,300 in the Antilles and French Guiana.

More French forces are based permanently in former African colonies: 300 in Gabon, 1,200 in the Central African Republic, 1,200 in Senegal, 500 in the Ivory Coast, and 3,500 in Djibouti.

These numbers understate French strength, however, since many of the troops are specialists who maintain arms, ammunition and weapons systems, including tanks and self-propelled artillery.

Rock 'n Roll puts Burma authorities in a twist

Rangoon (AFP) - The plainclothes policeman, waving his megaphone towards a group of young rock 'n' roll dancers, shouted: "Attention, first warning: it is forbidden to shake the body."

"We shake our bodies because we feel like it," retorted a resentful youth wearing a Western shirt and faded jeans, cut short and tight at the ankles.

This scene at an annual charity festival symbolizes the gap between the official puritanism of General Ne Win's Government and the wishes of privileged Burmese youth, who are able to buy Western goods on the black market.

The star turn of the evening was a group called Playboy, the most popular of Burma's five or six pop groups, which began to appear a few years ago.

Even the name of the group, featured on big publicity posters with the inevitable logo of a pair of bunny ears, is provocative in a country where official propaganda strongly discourages Western tendencies, particularly among young people.

But the Government is apparently unwilling to harness young people too much, so it tolerates popular music on condition that they do not "shake their bodies".

The Playboy group also manages to placate the authorities while catering to modern tastes by interspersing pop songs with traditionally inspired music.

The black market brings a substantial quantity of Western goods from Thailand into Rangoon, where they are in great demand.

For these privileged children, mainly the sons and daughters of influential officials, jeans are better than the traditional *longyi* (a type of sarong knotted at the front).

Police have also begun raiding Rangoon's red light district, and have virtually closed down the half-dozen restaurants or bars in Rangoon where pretty young hostesses were available, at a price. But Rangoon people doubt if the crackdown will last more than a month.

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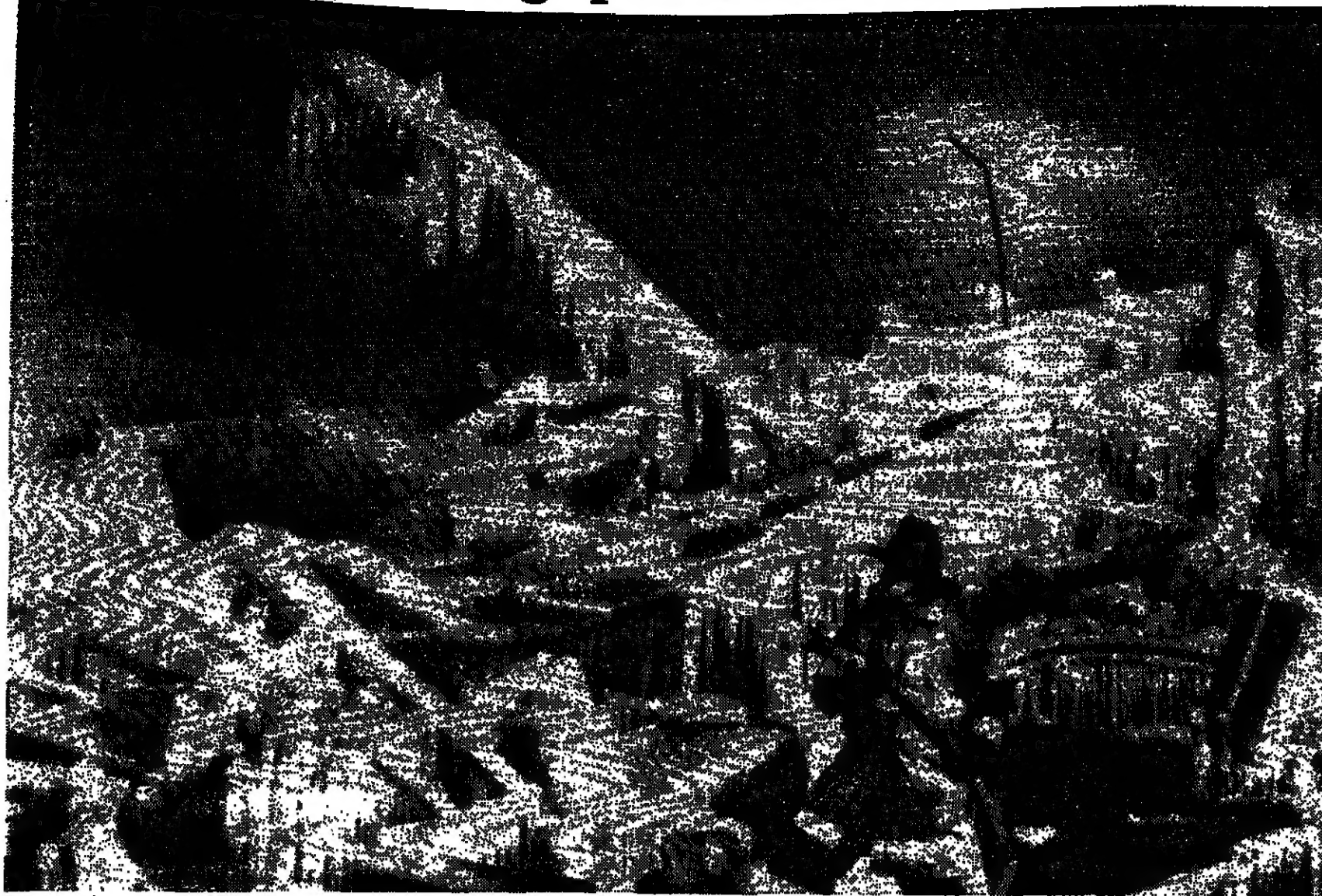
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The Big Snow grips America from the great plains to the Gulf of Mexico



Cold comfort: Firefighting in Boston and (right) trying to keep oranges warm in Florida.



Worse to come as death toll rises to 270

The death toll in one of the worst American winters of the century has climbed to nearly 270.

There have been 10 days of record low temperatures and forecasters predicted yesterday that more bitterly cold weather can be expected.

About 100 of those whose deaths are attributed to the weather have frozen in their homes and on the streets. In New York the cold has contributed to 14 deaths and this figure includes six people who froze to death on the streets, in the subway or in derelict buildings.

Near Albany, capital of New York state, a girl of two froze to death when she got out of bed on Christmas Eve

and wandered outside in her pyjamas. Her name was Sunshine. Her mother was collecting Christmas presents from the home next door. It was not until Christmas morning that she was missed. They followed her footprints and found her body frozen in a porch.

Police said she would not have survived more than 10 minutes in temperatures of minus 10F.

In South Dakota tons of coal were sent to reservations where Indians were burning their furniture to keep warm. The cold wave covers much of the

country from the Great Plains to the Gulf of Mexico and scores of cities have recorded their lowest ever temperatures.

In Miami Florida, the temperature fell to 33F the city's lowest December figure. Throughout Florida, Louisiana and Texas there is concern about the citrus crop as oranges freeze on trees and green vegetables are blighted. Losses are running into many billions of dollars and thousands of fruit pickers have been thrown out of work.

People in the southern states are suffering particularly because they are not used to severe winters and freezing temperatures.

A television report yesterday showed the swollen blistered feet of a woman suffering from frost bite in Atlanta, Georgia.

Throughout the country there has been a spate of fires caused by overloaded heaters and firemen have had to cope with ice as well as fires. One Lake Erie icebreaker was battling to free 14 cargo vessels trapped in the ice.

There was a relative respite yesterday in parts of the country as temperature rose above zero for the first time in more than a week. But forecasters said that more very cold air is on its way from North-West Canada.

Cuba may be drawn into Pretoria-Luanda war

From Michael Hornsby, Johannesburg

South African forces are engaged for the first time in more than two years in extensive fighting with Angolan troops in southern Angola, and there is a risk that the 25,000 Cubans estimated to be in that country could become directly involved.

The fighting was initially described last week by General Constant Viljoen, the chief of the South African Defence Force, as a limited campaign against the guerrilla bases of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO).

The aim of the campaign, he said, was to blunt an expected annual rainy-season southward thrust by SWAPO guerrillas from their Angolan sanctuary into northern Namibia. SWAPO has been fighting for Namibia's independence for the past 17 years.

However, late on Monday, speaking to South African journalists on his return to Pretoria after spending Christmas with his troops, General Viljoen largely confirmed Angolan claims of heavy fighting and accused the Angolans and Cubans of sheltering SWAPO.

SWAPO was "playing a tortoise-like game", General Viljoen said. When things are quiet, and we are not there, SWAPO gets out of its Fapla (Angolan army) shell and moves away, scurrying back when we appear. It's a very tricky situation. But if Fapla

gets in the way, we shall certainly shoot.

"We do not like becoming involved with Fapla and Cuban forces and would rather respect them in their areas and expect them to respect our fight against SWAPO. We drop leaflets telling them that our argument is with SWAPO and not with them," the general said. But South Africa could not stand by while SWAPO benefited from the protection provided by the sophisticated weapons supplied to Fapla by the Soviet Union and Cuba.

The general said the operation had begun as long ago as December 6, although reports of heavy fighting only emerged a week ago. "It will go on until we reach our target - to knock SWAPO for six and stop plans to infiltrate South West Africa, mainly the Sector 10 Ovambo area," he said.

According to General Viljoen, as many as 1,400 SWAPO troops, fresh from retraining in Angolan bases, could be involved in the rainy-season offensive. Seven companies of between 120 and 140 men each are advancing south along four infiltration routes in the central and western regions of southern Angola, he said.

This part of Angola is directly north of the Ovamboland region of Namibia, where there is widespread support for SWAPO. From there, if the experience of recent years is any guide, the guerrillas will try to slip eastward through the thick

bush of the Kavango region, and then south into the white farmlands around the copper-mining town of Tsumeb.

General Viljoen said the five South African soldiers whose deaths were announced last week had been killed "when a rather large Fapla group ambushed and attacked a platoon involved in a follow-up operation" near the town of Caluendo, just over 100 miles inside Angola in the province of Cuando Cubango. He denied Angolan claims that the platoon had been trying to capture the town.

He also made no mention of the Angolan allegation that the South Africans had occupied the town of Cassinga, more than 150 miles north of the Namibia-Angolan border, and denied that South African aircraft had been shot down during the operation while attacking civilian targets.

General Viljoen did say, however, that Soviet-made Sam 8 missiles had been fired at South African fighter planes, fuelling speculation that the destruction of anti-aircraft missile sites could be one of the main aims of the operation.

Another suggestion is that the South Africans want to punish the Angolans for their brusque rejection of Pretoria's recent offer to disengage its forces over a trial period of 30 days from January 31, 1984, provided Angola undertook to restrain SWAPO and Cuban forces

Protest note to Thatcher Catalans back IRA bombers

From Harry Debelius, Madrid

Nationalists, d'Esquerra (Left Nationalists), a minority Catalan political organization has sent a letter of protest to Mrs Margaret Thatcher about suggestions that Sinn Fein the political wing of the IRA, should be outlawed after the Harrods bombing. It called such a possibility "a repressive measure which attacks the national freedoms of the Irish people".

According to a communiqué distributed to journalists here the Catalan party also sent a note to Sinn Fein leaders urging them "to continue the struggle for the social, political and

nationalist liberties of the Irish people".

Here in Spain, meanwhile, the Justice Ministry is studying whether political encouragement of ETA Basque terrorists is within the law.

Leaders of Herri Batasuna - the left-wing Peoples Unity party which acts as a front for ETA - said at a news conference that ETA attacks on policemen and soldiers could be considered legitimate.

Justice officials are determining whether the remarks were an infringement of the law known as "apology for terrorism". Speaking for Herri Batasuna,

Señor Jon Idigoras said: "ETA's armed actions can be considered legitimate at this time because there are no political and democratic channels through which the aspirations of the Basque people can be realized".

He rejected the statute that gives the Basques autonomous regional government because it did not include the possibility of the Basque country seceding from Spain. He called the police and the Army "occupation forces".

Another prominent member of the Basque party said: "The Spanish flag is the symbol of oppression. It is not our flag."

Spain shuts airport and discos for safety's sake

From Harry Debelius, Madrid

Reacting to recent disasters, the civil aviation authorities closed Barajas airport, Madrid for eight hours yesterday and will do so again today for repairs to runways, taxiways and lighting systems, while the authorities in several Spanish cities have closed dozens of discotheques for alleged breaches of safety regulations.

According to airport sources, the airliner collision and fire on December 7 which took the lives of 93 people, damaged asphalt surfaces and signal lights, making repairs necessary. However, the Spanish Airline Pilots' Association complained

immediately after the disaster, that there were defects in the marking and lighting of runways and taxiways which were a cause of the accident.

The discotheques' closure follows a fire in Madrid on December 17 which resulted in 83 deaths. Mayors in many cities have been closing discotheques, cinemas and other places of entertainment which fail to provide adequate safety conditions.

The mayor of the south-eastern city of Murcia is reported to have shut 20 establishments, provoking an angry protest from local businessmen.

Prague attacks Washington's Unesco threat

Vienna (Reuters) - By threatening to leave UNESCO, America was planning either to break the educational, scientific and cultural organization of the UN, or to gain decisive influence over it, Czechoslovakia yesterday claimed.

"The destructive US policy does not end with the announced withdrawal from UNESCO," the Czechoslovak Communist Party daily, *Rude Pravo*, said. Washington's hostility to the UN had been shown in September, when New York and New Jersey authorities refused to let Soviet Aircraft land

Andropov's letter of apology leaves gaps

From Richard Owen, Moscow

President Andropov's unprecedented absence from this week's delayed Central Committee plenum has caused anxiety among party officials despite the ailing leader's determined attempt to give a strong lead from behind the scenes.

Officials reportedly believe that while assurances that Mr Andropov's disability is "temporary" may be largely accepted in Russia, the lack of visible Kremlin leadership could seriously affect Moscow's dialogue with the West.

In a speech made in absentia on Monday and published on the front page of *Pravda* yesterday, Mr Andropov apologized for not attending the plenum because of "temporary causes". "I have attentively studied all the materials which underlie the plan for the coming year," he wrote. "I thought a great deal about them and was preparing to speak and outline some of my ideas".

Observers said that this was intended to give the impression that Mr Andropov had recently recovered but suffered a temporary relapse. An explanation accepted by some Russians. Others were sceptical, however, pointing out that Mr Andropov had not appeared for five months and was clearly seriously ill.

"The Central Committee is not that of a man who is thinking of stepping down, and the promotion of Andropov associates such as Mr Vitaly Vorotnikov and General Viktor Chebrikov seems designed to ensure that his policies are carried out. Mr Vorotnikov, who is only 57, must now be considered a leadership contender in the Andropov mould. With Mr Mikhail Solomentsev, aged 70, the Politburo now numbers 13, and Mr Andropov can probably count on a mathematical majority."

Tass yesterday announced that the plenum had ended with no important speeches on the second day. Observers had expected a statement on foreign policy - a subject not touched on by Mr Andropov - but it now seems that the Soviet leadership's view of East-West relations will be stated by a senior leader today or tomorrow at the Supreme Soviet.

There are about 2,500 crematoria in China which account for 90 per cent of all bodies in the cities, but only 30 per cent nationally.

Grave problem for China

By Tony Samstag

About six million Chinese, the equivalent of the population of Switzerland, die each year, and burying them all would theoretically need 10,000 acres of land and more than 70 million cu ft of timber.

The Chinese government is, accordingly, intensifying its 30-year-old campaign to promote cremation and simplify funeral services, according to Earthscan, the London-based environment and development information agency.

Just over 10 per cent of

China's land is cultivated, averaging a quarter-acre for each of its one billion people. "The old burial customs required selecting an auspicious grave site according to portents of wind and water," Earthscan reports. "More often than not good farmland was occupied. In Peking between 1949 and 1964 graves used over 526 acres of fertile fields."

There are about 2,500 crematoria in China which account for 90 per cent of all bodies in the cities, but only 30 per cent nationally.

Lionesses put on the pill to give wildebeeste a sporting chance

From our own correspondent Etosha National Park, Namibia

An over-supply of lions in Namibia's Etosha National Park, one of the world's largest, most varied and perhaps least-known reserves, has given rise to Africa's most unusual experiment in family planning.

Led by Dr Hu Berry, a research biologist, a small team of specialists is hoping to establish that the park's lion population can be controlled by implanting time-release contraceptives in lionesses rather than by the traditional method of culling.

The park takes its name from the Etosha Pan, a bleached expanse of alkaline clay stretching to the horizon and hundreds of feet deep, which occupies more than a fifth of the reserve's 8,530 square miles. The pan is believed to be the dried-out bed of a prehistoric lake.

Driving out along one of the spits jutting into the pan, you can easily imagine yourself a lone explorer on some dead and alien planet. But the pan's wooded southern rim, punctuated by watering places, paradoxically teems with one of the richest and most visible concentrations of wild life in Africa.

Some of that richness is now threatened by man's well-



In the pre-pill age: these lion cub quins brought happiness to London Zoo.

meaning attempts at preservation. A 500-mile-long fence, completed in 1970, surrounds the park, and was intended mainly to prevent animals from straying on to adjacent farmland where they risked being shot.

It also shelters game from the Bitter bush war being fought in Ovamboland to the north between South African forces and guerrillas of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), which has been fighting for 17 years for Namibia's independence from South African rule.

But the fence has also stopped the age-old, seasonal migration of wildebeest, zebra

and other hoofed animals, which as a result of boreholes to provide year-round waterholes in an area prone to drought has further eased the task of hunting lions by creating perfect ambush spots, to which the big cats are immune, has furnished them with an ample supply of carcasses to feed on.

It seems that rain-filled gravel pits, left behind after the building of gravel roads for the benefit of the 50,000 visitors attracted to the park each year, are almost ideal incubators of anthrax bacteria because of the limestone soil.

This is all good news for

lions. Most lion cubs in Etosha survive beyond their first year, whereas in more normal conditions at least 75 per cent would be killed off by the rigours of a hunting life. The lion population may now be as high as 500, giving the park the highest predator-to-prey ratio in Africa.

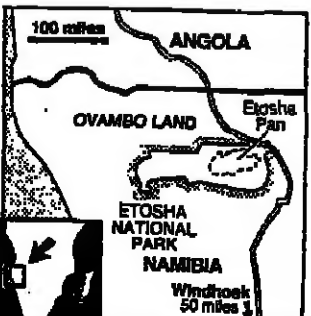
It is bad news for other animals, especially those who cannot stray far from water. The number of blue wildebeest, for example, has dropped from 25,000 in the mid-1950s to only 2,500 today. The Zebra population has also declined.

Putting lionesses on the pill could be part of the answer. In South Africa's Kruger National

Park, Dr Berry recalls, some 65 per cent of the entire lion population was shot in the mid-1970s. But within 17 months the number of lions was bigger than ever.

"As a result of this and other experiences we are now wary of culling predators", Dr Berry says. "So we are testing contraception on lionesses. Contraception is more humane, does not destroy the genetic stock and is reversible".

Since July last year ovulation-suppressing capsules have been implanted in the shoulder muscle of 10 lionesses from five prides by Dr Berry and a gynaecologist who comes up from Windhoek, the Nam-



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Helping Britain's Team to the Olympics

The pornographic free-for-all has run out of promise in Sweden. Sex crimes have not diminished, prostitution thrives.

But a puritan backlash has begun with vigilantes raiding the porn shops and the rise of a God-loving pop star

End of the non-stop sex show

By Chris Mosey

Stockholm
The first snowflakes of winter dance in the air to a strange beat. In the futuristic heart of Stockholm — a square called Sergels Torg which is bleakly modern and paved in black and white — Maria Johansson, aged 65, is seated at a portable electric organ playing and singing, slightly off-key, "I have a Friend in Jesus".

Behind her, a monolith of steel in concrete and glass, stands The House of Culture, built like everything else in sight in the late 1950s or early 1960s. The same building extends backwards across a walkway into another towering modern edifice, which until recently housed the Swedish Parliament. This is now empty, waiting to play host to the Stockholm Peace Conference in 1984. In an act of unconscious symbolism, the parliamentarians have withdrawn from this desolate new frontier to their former headquarters on Holy Ghost Island in the city's medieval Old Town.

Maria looks up through watery eyes and smiles. "I have been singing here for 11 years", she says. "There is a need for God's message here — there are so many unhappy people in Sweden."

Three steps away on the Underground lies another of Maria's venues, an older, more human square called Odenplan, where drunks shiver on park benches in the shadow of Gustav Vasa Church and commuters hurry through the gathering darkness to catch buses bound for the suburbs.

Behind the church, just across the street, is a garishly painted red and blue door with the words "Non-Stop Show" stencilled across it. This is no longer true — the show has stopped. Sexorama, another desolate new frontier of sorts, has also been abandoned.

A container by the kerbside has been filled with the non-saleable fittings of a club that once lured tourists from all over the world to "Europe's wildest sex show". In a dimly-lit basement the photofit blondes with empty eyes were overressed if they wore stockings.

Today Sexorama has been gutted by the bailiffs. Such accoutrements that were of value — amplification equipment to back the striptease, flashing

lights, mirrors from the private posing rooms, TV sets that once screened raunchy movies in a darkened video saloon, for example — have been confiscated by a state tax collector with the wonderfully appropriate name of Miss Birgitta Prim.

Two women, Miss Prim and Sweden's former Minister of Social Affairs, Mrs Karin Soder, have between them contrived to end the reign of Mr Ulrich Geismar, once dubbed "Sweden's King of Sex" by the nation's tabloid press. Mr Geismar now lives quietly in Spain, where he has been "unavailable for comment" for some time. Miss Prim would like to ask him about the £150,000 she claims he owes in back taxes.

Mrs Soder is just happy about his departure. The last vestiges of Geismar's "kingdom" are the now-locked doors of Sexorama and his other property, the more opulent Chat Noir, of which he once boasted on local television that customers included major Swedish multinational companies entertaining foreign buyers. Chat Noir was the top end of the market in a twilight world of sexual fantasy which is being slowly eradicated.

A law drafted by Mrs Soder, which came on the statute book this year, has so severely curbed the activities of Sweden's sex clubs that most of them have shut up shop. At their peak in the early 1970s there were 14 in Stockholm alone; today there are just two, and one seedy topos "bar", where no alcoholic beverages may be served.

A country that only a decade ago was lauded by liberals the world over for its daring social reforms and sexual liberty has, in the space of relatively few years, gone back to its roots. A narrow puritanism has always been the dormant heart of a basically agrarian society, hurled into the modern age by an industrial revolution which arrived only in the latter half of the last century.

Towards the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s, before the traumas of recurring energy crises and economic tribulations became commonplace, the future was always only just around the corner, like a shining liberated dream

beckoning seductively. Everything seemed possible for those in the vanguard of social change.

Their crusade towards a brave new world that never arrived led, in 1971, to the repeal of the already outdated Law on the Offending of Decency and Morality, which had until the mid-1960s been used by the police to suppress pornography. With its disappearance the floodgates opened.



Ulrich Geismar, the king of sex whose realm is now behind locked doors

Mrs Gina Sundin, originally from Spain, is one of the few survivors. She runs an establishment called Cabaret Nana, an oasis of flashing lights, loud disco music and soundtracks laden with heavy breathing, at the end of an exceptionally grey, dismal street not far from Stockholm's Central Station.

Although her club has picked up many of Ulrich Geismar's former customers, life in a changing society has not been easy. "When I first opened, everything was allowed", she says. "Now they want to forbid it all. Swedes have never really been able to enjoy themselves without suffering from a bad conscience afterwards. Soon there will be more things forbidden in this society than are permitted."

Mrs Soder's law stopped only just short of banning striptease. It outlawed

instead "sexually provocative poses". Detective Inspector Torsten Aslund, of the Stockholm vice squad, said: "The law allows striptease and the showing of pornographic films, nothing more. A series of raids and court cases has resulted. 'Some of my best customers are policemen nowadays', said Mrs Sundin. 'As a taxpayer, I feel I am getting something back for my money.'"

Curiously, it is often the selfsame sexual liberals of yesteryear who now spearhead the advance of the new puritanism in Swedish society. Mr Hans Nestius, chairman of a peculiarly Swedish organization called the National Association for Sexual Information, which fought for the repeal of the Law on the Offending of Decency and Morality, now bitterly regrets the consequences.

"When we took up the fight against the ban on pornography, the pornography that was around was shoddy, very bad quality. We thought we would bring about a happy, warm, sensual pornography — everything should be free and open", he says.

From his office window in Kungsgatan, Stockholm's equivalent to London's Oxford Street, Mr Nestius now looks out on the Hi-Son emporium, Sweden's biggest pornographic book shop, lately extended to include private film and video booths and an air-conditioned cinema. Mr Nestius regards it with disgust.

"Pornography doesn't stand for sexual freedom, for openness, for sexual radicalism, as I once maintained myself. It is dark and musty inside a porn shop — there is a lot of shame and guilt there. The men who stand leafing through the merchandise always look dreadfully oppressed."

The arguments the sexual liberals used in the 1960s have nearly all rebounded on them: that pornography and the sex clubs would provide a sexual outlet for the handicapped and the elderly (surveys show that customers are overwhelmingly ordinary, usually married men, most frequently in their thirties or forties); that sex crimes would diminish as repressed sexual energy was given an escape valve (apart from indecent exposure,

all such crimes have increased steadily); that prostitution would become a thing of the past (the world's oldest profession still plies its trade).

Nestius, typical of the "New Puritan", sees no irony in his change of heart. He is merely continuing the crusade for sexual freedom, but in a different way. His association's July campaign, titled "Fight for Love", in which he and other members visited the holiday beaches of the Baltic island of Gotland quizzing and advising young Swedes on their sexual habits, was a huge success (certainly a greater success than it would have been at Blackpool, where such "openness" might well have earned Mr Nestius a fat lip).

The New Puritanism has also seen the emergence in Swedish society of the sex vigilante. Groups of militant women carry out night-time raids on porn shops and sex clubs, daubing them with feminist slogans and occasionally harassing customers. It was these women who plastered posters all over Stockholm earlier this year with the registration numbers of kerf-crawling cars and advised people to telephone the licensing authority for the names and addresses of the owners (something the authority is required by law to divulge).

The new mood is no better exemplified than in pop music. Yesterday's idol was blonde Abba vocalist Agnetha Faltskog, who once bounced around the stage with a vitality that earned her the title "sexiest bottom in Europe". Today's is Carola Hagkvist, aged 17, whose stage garb is usually a singularly shapeless white juco costume, and who delights in talking about her belief in God.

Foreigners are frequently caught unaware by the shift in Swedish attitudes. Dennis Hopper arrived to take the leading role in a new British-Swedish coproduction titled *The Inside Man* wearing a "Pornography is Fun" badge, given him by Larry Flint, publisher of *Hustler*, the notorious American men's magazine.

"I gather it no longer is", he said. "I've been getting some strange looks. I'd better get rid of the thing."

moreover... Miles Kington Cheese and ham, Big Brother

The last time I renewed my TV licence, I decided to round it up to £50 from £46 in order to give the BBC a bit of spare cash. I have always believed the licence fee was far too small, especially when I am being employed by radio, and I sincerely believed that if I paid the bill, and left a £4 tip, it would make the BBC feel better, and the tip might come back to me eventually. So I sent off a cheque for £50. It came back, marked "incorrect amount". I sent it off again, explaining that it was the correct amount, plus a bit over. It came back again, with a letter telling me that there was no machinery for accepting any amount except £46. Back I wrote again, asking in that case how I could donate the extra money to the BBC. The gentleman in Swansea replied, humorously under the circumstances I thought that I should send the money direct to the BBC and that the best man to get in touch with was the Director-General.

This I did not do. Bribery is not a thing I condone, and although my motives would have been of the purest, it would have looked very bad if it ever got out that I was sending cash direct to the top of the BBC, so I decided to keep the money for a rainy day. In any case, one never knows, does one, just what might have happened to the money it might have been used to buy another American programme, or keep Desmond Wilcox on, something I didn't entirely approve of, and then it would have been embarrassing to write and ask for my money back.

The rainy day came sooner than I thought. I was travelling to Bath by Inter-City 125, and British Rail have now tinted the windows so that every day on Inter-City looks like a rainy day. I went to the buffet. I dithered between buying a toasted ham sandwich and buying a toasted cheese sandwich. Eventually I compromised by asking for a toasted ham and cheese sandwich.

"Can't do that, I'm afraid, sir." "Haven't got the ingredients?" I asked. "Oh, yes, we've got the ham and cheese all right, but we haven't got a price for a ham and cheese sandwich. Sorry, sir."

It was the TV licence situation all over again. He hadn't got the machinery. There was a little regulation which stopped him from solving the problem, even though he could quite easily have improvised round it. And this situation crops up again and again in British life.

Personally, I feel it's because we haven't got a written constitution. Not being governed by a constitution is always said to be a good thing, and no doubt it is considering the constitutions that some nations have landed up with, but it has to be compensated for somewhere, and we compensate by having millions of tiny regulations.

Because we feel instinctively that they are silly, we tend to by-pass them wherever possible. The most notable example of this is the work-to-rule syndrome.

Whenever trade unionists want to protest against something, one of their first weapons is threatening to work to rule — in other words, threatening to obey all the regulations which they should be obeying all along. Behaving normally is seen to be an exceptional state of affairs. Meanwhile, without realizing it perhaps, we have all become used to winking at regulations and passing by on the other side. George Orwell had a word for it. He called it doublethink. When we talk about doublethink, we like to see it on a grand scale and think of Russia, where they talk communism in public and think other thoughts in private. But on a petty scale, we are just as guilty of doublethink. Big Brother isn't watching us; he too is working out ways of getting round the rules.

Incidentally, Orwell also forecast that Big Brother's. It's George Orwell's preview by 1984, looking down at us. Well, there is a face looking down at us as we go into the famous year, and a name that is on everybody's lips, but it isn't Big Brother's. It's George Orwell's, previewing a thousand productions and features. I wonder if he would have been amused.

CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 233)

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THE TIMES DIARY

Dobson's choice

Frank Dobson, Labour MP for Holborn and St Pancras, has written a starry letter to the Prime Minister suggesting that the venue of the next world economic summit, to be held next June, should be switched from Lancaster House to somewhere in Hackney or Tower Hamlets so that those presiding over the current world recession can observe at first hand the disastrous consequences of what is happening to the worst-off people in our capital city. He also suggests that "all concerned, instead of staying at public expense in lush West End luxury hotels, lodge instead in the bed and breakfast hotels used by London local authorities to house families made homeless by the policies of your own Government." Mr Dobson said he made the suggestion because "world leaders live in a cocoon, going from five star hotel to VIP lounge to private plane." One wonders, though, whether living in Tower Hamlets for a bit would give them a true picture about the lives of the less fortunate since its residents include Dr and Mrs David Owen and Janet Street Porter.

In confidence

The computer sub-committee of the Commons Services Committee is finding its job hard going. Earlier this month a trip to the United States and Canada to research information technology was cancelled after accusations of junketing. And the committee is encountering fierce resistance to anything that might bear the dreaded label "up-to-date". To computerize the House of Commons would mean MPs sharing basic information so that, for instance, some constituents' problems and the answers to them could be stored in a memory bank. Sadly, the committee reports in its minutes of evidence that 66 per cent of MPs questioned opposed a new system on offer, on the grounds that "members always suspect each other; members are jealous of one another and the House of Commons is not a commercial organization".

● A visitor lost in the rambling corridors of County Hall thought the GLC had totally taken leave of its senses when he came across a sign directing him to "Alternative Gentlemen".

Moved to tears

A colleague who planned to move into a new house in Buckinghamshire over Christmas was shocked to discover an old deed of covenant relating to the property. Originally imposed by a greedy ancestor to protect a pub long since disappeared - next door, it prohibits "the manufacture, sale or consumption of alcohol on the premises". His relief when his solicitor discovered that the prohibition could not be legally enforced and that Christmas could be celebrated in the traditional Fleet Street manner was profound.

BARRY FANTONI



'As a sign of respect, our Lil is wearing her hairnet at half-mast'

Easy buck

It is the season of the year when certain privileged people, including the Prime Minister, the Lord Mayor of London, and the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, receive a good-sized piece of venison from the Queen's Warrant. The custom goes back to 1100 AD, although these days the recipients are charged £6.50 for the privilege. This still makes the venison the cheapest in town: the average weight of the "gift" is 14lb, while the retail price of venison at Sainsbury's is £3 a lb.

That figures

The Civil Service's Management and Personnel Office broke new ground in its annual report on public bodies for 1983, when it produced figures on the number of men and women appointed to the boards of nationalized industries during this year. The figures are: Male appointments: 165. Female appointments: 4.

Saumur, aye

In his new book, *The Illustrated Winespeak: Ronald Searle's Wicked World of Winespeak*, the cartoonist attacks the uninspired winter-babble of brokers attempting "to enlighten the baffled consumer regarding the more esoteric aspects of, say, Rotterdam routes" with inspired drawings illustrating their verbal contortions. The book, which has gone into its fourth printing since October, is about to be published by the Japanese, who once made the author a prisoner-of-war. The question is: how do descriptions like "overripe coupled with some tartness" or "lots of body, but supple" translate into Japanese?

PHS

Let's ease this bed of nails

by Alfred Morris

Christmas would not be Christmas without hard-luck stories with happy endings. This is a brief story about a happy ending with a cruel twist.

A Bristol woman was severely burned in a fire and needed a skin graft to her back. She and her husband exist on supplementary benefit, and he applied for a special payment to help buy a foam rubber mattress to ease her pain at night.

In support of the claim, he wrote: "The skin is very tender and easily hurt. She finds the springs on her present mattress put severe pressure on her back. My wife has been sleeping very badly because of the pain... and urgently needs a springless mattress to avoid further deterioration of her back."

With assistance from the Child Poverty Action Group, the claim became an important test case. It went to a tribunal of three social security commissioners (the equivalent, in social security cases, of the Court of Appeal).

Arguing strongly against the claim, the solicitor for the DHSS's benefit officer said the mattress could not be paid for because the Supplementary Benefits Act 1976 excluded all medical or similar requirements. The tribunal upheld the claim, however, on the grounds that the exclusion applied only to the weekly requirements of a claimant, and not to single payments for unmet special needs.

This happy outcome overturned not just

the present Government's interpretation of the law, but that of successive governments. The family's pleasure must have been increased by the knowledge that the tribunal's ruling would help in many other cases of avoidable hardship.

One such case was that of an 80-year-old Cleveland woman with terminal cancer. She claimed a single payment to buy a high-backed chair, as she could no longer sit in her own chair without pain, but was turned down. Help should now readily be available in cases like hers, but this was not to be.

The tribunal's ruling that single payments for medical needs were allowable was reversed by amending Government regulations. While the pen that nullified the tribunal's decision was that of a DHSS minister, the hand was the Chancellor's. And, as with the swingeing cut in housing benefits and this year's £60m "saving" in invalidity pensions for the long-term sick and disabled, the beneficiaries will be Britain's richest taxpayers.

How many people were wrongly refused single payments under the 1976 Act before the law was changed? And is the Government now prepared, in the cause of elementary justice, to review all claims for medical or similar needs that were turned down before it changed the law?

Ministers cannot pretend the money is not available. Norman Tebbit spent £39,000

publicizing the compensation available to people who broke their contracts of employment by refusing to join a trade union, while Michael Heseltine earmarked £1m to campaign for "more positive" attitudes to nuclear arms. These are good enough precedents for the DHSS to follow now.

Supplementary benefit, as the benefit of last resort, surely ought to meet urgent needs where there is no alternative source of assistance. In these two cases, the NHS could not help; nor did the local authority. Yet a woman was in preventable pain and had a need which a caring society should have met.

So from where should such needs be met? The question is all the more urgent as provision for the NHS grows smaller, and as cuts in local government spending leave more and more disabled people without the help to which they are entitled under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act.

Never was a resource of last resort for unmet and urgent need more necessary than it is today. For it makes no sense to deny people help without which they can very soon find themselves in hospitals or other institutions, at far greater cost to the taxpayer and ratepayer alike. It reveals a gap in social provision as self-defeating as it is inhumane.

The author, Labour MP for Manchester, Wythenshawe, was Minister for the Disabled 1974-79.

Why a star wars strategy could help keep the peace

European attitudes to President Reagan's "star wars" proposals - the move to develop a space-based anti-ballistic missile system, agreed in principle a few weeks ago - have generally contained elements of both amusement and derision.

The arguments advanced by United States analysts in favour of the programme, aimed initially at long-term research, have not even been thought worthy of serious examination in Britain, despite their revolutionary nature and their possibly momentous consequences.

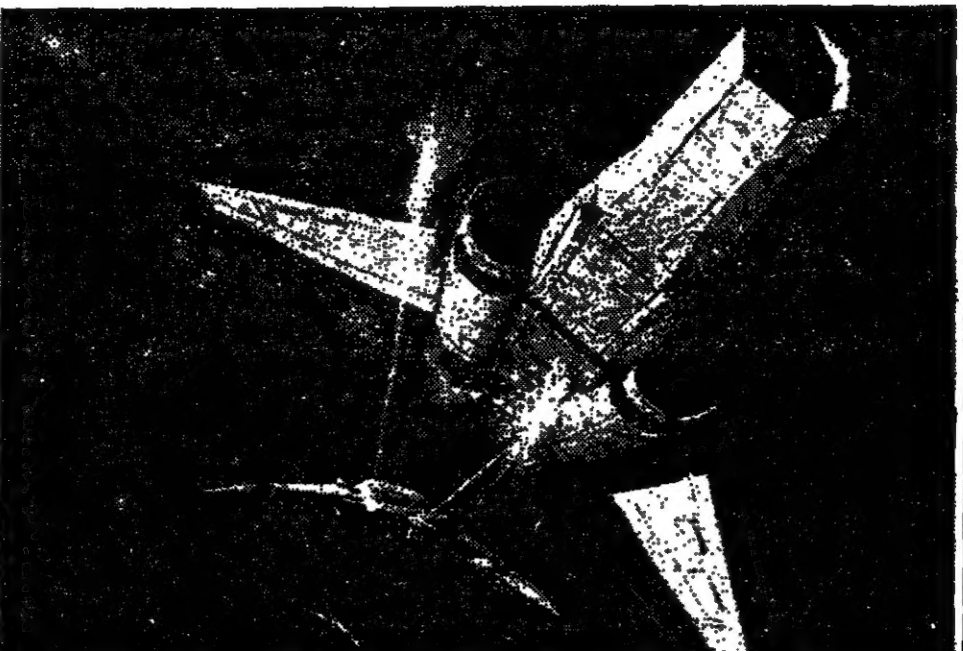
The European media have variously described the Reagan proposals as "absurd", "irresponsibly expensive", "dangerous" and "alarming". There has been almost universal agreement that the development represents another dangerous and escalatory round of the arms race. Strategic studies departments and institutes have either doubted that the proposals are feasible or have suggested that they represent a return to United States isolationism. Few people, if any, have publicly suggested that there might be some important political or strategic advantage to Europe or, for that matter, that there might be colossal dangers to Europe if the Soviet Union were to obtain an unopposed advance in "star wars" weaponry.

It is taken for granted that any benefits the proposals might yield would be purely and narrowly American ones. But if the development is taken in the context of the continuing crisis in transatlantic relations and the recent Soviet arms build-up, then it may be seen altogether more favourably.

Indeed, it may provide the answer to problems, inherent in the Nato strategy of flexible response, which have long been perceived by a number of those with a professional interest in strategic issues - weaknesses which politicians have generally not been keen to expose to public scrutiny. These weaknesses flow from the nature of the ultimate step in the flexible response strategy: the use of 'US intercontinental missiles in retaliation against a Soviet attack on Europe.

According to a common view, even if the United States was willing to unleash its intercontinental ballistic missiles for this purpose, there would be little point in doing so, for Europe would have already been devastated. In any event, the claim, say, no United States president full possession of his mental faculties would risk Ameri-

Hollywood's vision of war in space - a scene from *Battlestar Galactica*. If fiction was ever transformed into fact, would it not be preferable to nuclear devastation on earth?



can cities to defend frequently "disloyal" European ones. Yet if the United States might feel this way, they might no longer be effectively deterred.

Evidently, the United States' nuclear umbrella is not what it was in the secure and happy days of American strategic superiority. The only merit in the present policy, it is said, is that the Soviets could not be sure that the United States would not so respond - and this doubt is sufficient to provide Europe with adequate deterrence against a Soviet attack. But with the progressive deterioration in transatlantic relations - of which the Grenada episode is but the latest chapter - and with further increases in Soviet military might, Nato's credibility has now been significantly eroded.

How much more erosion can it withstand before the whole strategy becomes plainly incredible is a difficult question to answer. Moreover, even with significant numbers of cruise and Pershing missiles in place, such doubts and anxieties are likely to remain. The question that may come to be asked is not "would the United States press the button against the wishes of European leaders?" but "would the United States ever contemplate pressing the button if it believed that by not doing so war could be limited to Europe?"

An effective western anti-ballistic missile system in space, however, could transform this situation by performing the inestimably valuable task of reducing the scale of the risks to the United States in providing nuclear protection to its European allies. If the risks are judged to be fewer, it follows that United States readiness to accept them is likely to be much enhanced, and the Soviet Union will have to take account of this in its strategic calculations. This is an important argument, but so far no European public figure appears even to have taken it into account.

Supposing, however, the Soviet

Union continues to exploit space for military purposes, ignoring the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 while the United States feels restrained by that treaty or by its critics at home and abroad. A moment's reflection suggests that if that happens, the western alliance will be doomed; close examination of the consequences only confirms one's initial fears.

If the Soviet Union were to develop the ability to destroy 90 per cent or so of the enemy's ballistic missiles before they re-entered the atmosphere while the United States failed to obtain a similar capacity, the Warsaw Pact might face a new and unique experience: a queue of admiring, friendly and sycophantic West European states waiting to join.

Since the United States Administration is committed so far only to examining the feasibility of "star wars" weaponry, we cannot be sure what degree of direct protection would be provided against missiles targeted on Europe. It is possible, however, that the "killer satellites" thought to be envisaged under the proposals could destroy ballistic missiles such as the SS20 as well as the strategic weapons aimed at the United States.

It is objected that the whole "star wars" phenomenon is in some ways more alarming than existing weaponry. Its development would certainly result in a substantial change of nuclear doctrine and strategy. Instead of the West signalling its intention to cause massive and unacceptable damage if attacked with nuclear weapons, it would instead be signalling its capacity substantially to withstand such an attack. Assuming that the Soviets continue to develop a similar capacity, we would have moved from mutually assured destruction, a policy which has caused profound if irrational anxiety, to mutually assured survival.

This, arguably, could well bring about a less turbulent and danger-

fraught international climate in which it would be easier to reach agreement about reductions in offensive weapons because by switching the emphasis to defensive systems, the stakes would not be so appallingly high. Is this so "alarming"? Historically speaking, most effective strategies have generally included a defensive as well as an offensive element: the present massive reliance on weapons of attack is an aberration, and may well account for many of the fears and apprehensions that have fuelled the growth of the peace movement.

To be sure, there is a strange breed of extra-terrestrial ecologists who argue that it is immoral to "take warfare" into space. But it is not warfare which would be sent there, but new instruments of deterrence. If that deterrence failed, the result would be a conflict between sophisticated and unmanned machines hurtling through the arid wastes of space, but it would be a war without initial loss of human life.

It cannot be safely asserted that war would remain conveniently in space. What may be said is that the immediate targets would be space-borne vehicles, missiles, or satellites, rather than cities or manned military installations on earth, and that such a conflict could conceivably end with a political settlement before human life had been lost.

This is a small part of the case that may be advanced in favour of some kind of "star wars" defence in the United States. Although it is new and strange to most people, it is not demonstrably absurd. Nor, I think, should it alarm Europeans more than, say, the deployment of the SS20s. It deserves serious and searching examination rather than scorn and derision.

Gerald Frost

The author is executive director of the Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies, London.

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The other-China card in our Hongkong hand

In the continuing negotiations with China over the future of Hongkong, Britain's highest card is not the legality of the nineteenth-century treaties. Nor are Peking's envoys impressed by references to unease in the colony at the prospect of communist rule.

What really strengthens the hand of Mrs Thatcher's representatives is China's determination not to terry the real audience of this high-stakes game: 18.5 million "compatriots" on Taiwan.

What stops China from abruptly regaining sovereignty of its desire to demonstrate to Taiwan that in the event of an orderly communist takeover, Hongkong's life - and by implication Taiwan's - would remain undisturbed. Hongkong could retain its own laws, currency, and even gambling, while under the newly-proposed special "mini-constitution" Hongkong's entrepreneurs would not be lumbered with China's style of socialism.

All this would be possible under the terms of Article 31 of the Chinese constitution, which designates "special economic areas". But whereas Article 31 lays down principles applicable to both Hongkong and Taiwan, only Taiwan is mentioned in the constitution's preamble, as "part of the sacred territory of the People's Republic of China". It is, the document confirms, "the lofty duty of the entire Chinese people, including our compatriots on Taiwan, to accomplish the great task of unifying the motherland".

"The runaway province" is therefore, Peking's ultimate glittering prize. Or, as Taiwan's Premier, Sun Yun-sun, said recently, "We are the nail in their eye". It is mentioned as the primary goal of Chinese endeavour in nearly every major speech by Deng Xiaoping.

Deng and his comrades want Taiwan back because its recovery would mean the end of the civil war with the Nationalists who fled to the island in 1949. There, with American help, they established a bustling economy, the envy of many underdeveloped countries, including China. Its per-capita income of almost \$2,500 places it fourth in the region, after Japan, Singapore, and Hongkong.

Taking Taiwan back by force is out of the question. If Deng ordered his massive navy and rocketry air force across the Taiwan Strait, a distance of more than 100 miles, they would be mauled by the Nationalists' superbly equipped and trained defence forces.

In September 1981, Marshal Ye Jianying, chairman of the National People's Congress standing committee, proposed to Taiwan "high degree of autonomy", including its own armed forces, and no interference from Peking in local matters. Taiwan's socio-economic system would continue unchanged. Ye promised. Its present leaders, including President Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-shek's son, would be offered high positions in the national government.

No one was surprised when President Chiang declared a month later that the Nationalists would never negotiate with their old enemies. They had twice before gone to the table only to be betrayed, they believed.

Finally, in July of this year, Deng Xiaoping made the most sweeping offer yet. Speaking through a Taiwan-raised Chinese professor who has lived in the US for 25 years, Deng guaranteed Taiwan its own army (which could buy its arms abroad), its own flag, and, most impressively, its own name: "Taiwan, China", the usage already adopted by the International Olympic Committee.

Deng's offer, too, has been turned down in Taipei. Premier Sun said that such advances are made only to persuade Washington that it is no longer necessary to defend Taiwan, now that China has abandoned the use of force in its reunification drive.

For the ethnic Taiwanese, descendants of coastal Chinese who have been settled on the island for centuries, reunification on any terms is abhorrent. They contend they have already suffered enough at the hands of the mainland Nationalists who appeared in 1945 to reclaim Taiwan from the Japanese, who had occupied it since 1895, and who have used it as a refuge since the 1949 communist victory. "They think of us only as a hotel, a bastion, and a stepping stone", maintains one Taiwanese dissident.

But do the Nationalists really

think of Taiwan merely as an offshore province when they are gathering strength for a great irretrievable reinvocation of the old mainland? Twenty-five years ago that was the animating idea on the island. Nowadays, the future looks different. "The changes on the mainland will be mainly political", says Premier Sun, "and will take many, many years. Already they are asking each other how they can learn from Taiwan."

Deng Xiaoping and other communist leaders have indeed conceded in public that Taiwan's prosperity greatly exceeds their own. But they are aware as well of Taiwan's free-wheeling lifestyle, its western-style pop music and its prostitution - all signs of what Peking terms "spiritual pollution".

China cannot smash its way in, and if it did, few would welcome the "liberating" army. So the Chinese keep up a successful campaign to isolate their rival diplomatically, and a less successful one to hamper Taiwan's international participation in commerce, scholarship, and sport.

At the same time, and as yet with little effect, China's leaders try to persuade Taiwan that their proposed semi-autonomy will not develop into the bondage of that other semi-autonomous region - Tibet. The mainland's signal to Taiwan is "Watch how we do in Hongkong."

Jonathan Mirsky

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J. R. Spencer

Life sentences: a barbaric lottery

Eight years ago Mrs Doris Croft, a middle-aged widow from Balmham, Cambridgeshire, discovered that her elderly lover was about to desert her for a younger woman. She battered him to death with a rolling-pin in a jealous rage, and for this she was put on probation for three years.

Two months ago - as was widely reported - Mrs Pamela Megginson, a middle-aged widow from the nearby village of Whittlesford, was sentenced to life imprisonment at the Old Bailey for an identical offence. Mrs Megginson used a champagne bottle, a more stylish weapon than Mrs Croft employed, and killed an aged lecherous millionaire, a more exciting victim than Mrs Croft's, who was the aging lecherous landlord of a public house. She also killed him in an apartment in Cap Ferrat, a more romantic setting than the working boarding house where Mrs Croft's victim met his death.

But such trivia aside, the facts are identical. In abstract some sort of case can be made for saying that either sentence is the right one on such facts as these, but as it is supposedly the first principle of law that like cases should be treated alike, we may ask how the law can be so capricious. In theory, the law of England does not recognize the existence of a crime passion. On this side of the Channel a deliberate killing, however passionate, is murder, and murder is automatically visited by the sentence of life imprisonment, the judge having no discretion to order anything else. The defences of provocation and diminished responsibility sometimes operate to reduce a deliberate killing to manslaughter, an offence for which the judge does have a discretion in sentencing.

But, on the face of it, neither of these defences is of much use to people like Mrs Megginson and Mrs Croft. For provocation, the defendant must have lost his self-control: it must be a killing in hot blood, not in cold. Furthermore, the defendant's loss of self-control must be the result of behaviour "enough to make a reasonable man do as he did." The jury decides whether these criteria are present, and as we all know, juries seldom believe the rules. Subject to this, however, there is unlikely to be a strong defence of provocation for a woman who deliberately murders a lover who has ill-used her. Diminished responsibility is also limited in scope. On the face of it, therefore, women who deliberately kill their lovers can expect life imprisonment, however shamefully they have been treated.

In practice, however, it is quite another story. In the first place, the prosecution, if it wishes, can bring a charge of manslaughter where it is technically murder, and no one can question its decision. Furthermore, if it does start off prosecuting for murder, the prosecution is quite entitled to strike a deal whereby the defence accepts a plea of guilty to manslaughter in return for dropping the murder charge. The judge has a veto over this, and can insist on the murder charge being tried - as happened in the Yorkshire Ripper trial. However, such judicial inter-

vention is rare. So if the prosecution is sympathetic to the accused, or does not want the bother of a contested trial, a person technically guilty of murder is almost guaranteed a conviction for manslaughter only.

This happens in a good many crimes of passion, and was what happened in the case of Mrs Croft. If the conviction is for manslaughter rather than for murder, then the judge has a complete discretion as to sentence: fines of one shilling, and conditional discharges, have been given for manslaughter in the past.

In the case of Mrs Megginson and her champagne bottle, there was no deal between prosecution and defence and she was therefore tried for murder. She sought to rely on the defence of provocation, and the jury after deliberating for five hours - found it was not made out. On her conviction for murder, the life sentence followed automatically.

It is simply barbaric that the same automatic life imprisonment should be imposed on the relative who puts a terminal cancer patient out of his agony, the wife who kills a husband who has systematically ill-treated her, the bank robber who shoots a cashier dead in cold blood, and the perversely who tortures a child to death for sadistic gratification. Like other barbaric legal rules - the one which formerly decreed hanging as the automatic penalty for theft of property worth more than 12d, for example - the fixed life sentence for murder produces results which society is prepared to accept only because a number of people quietly conspire to defeat it.

They are the Director of Public Prosecutions, or the counsel he instructs, who does a deal to reduce the charge to manslaughter; the judge who lets this happen; and the Home Secretary, who releases the majority of convicted murderers after some years in prison.

For most serious crimes society lays down a maximum sentence within which the judge imposes what he considers fair. The Court of Appeal correcting him if he is heavy-handed. But for the most serious crime of all the penalty is decided in a series of holes and corners, by people whose decision must be appealed against, and who cannot be called to account.

This would be bad enough in itself, but it causes the law to be devalued in other ways as well. First, because the law ordains compulsory life imprisonment for murder, but in practice often fails to impose it or fails to carry it out, the law cries "wolf!" The public widely believes that no murderer ever goes to prison for life - whereas a number of the worst murderers do - and the deterrent effect of the law is undermined.

And because the system throws up the occasional freak case in which a not-too-bad murderer actually collects a life sentence, the law is thought to be capriciously over-severe as well. By posing as tougher than it is, the law only makes an ass of itself.

The author is a lecturer in criminal law and criminal procedure at Cambridge University.

Jock Bruce-Gardyne

Not so bad a year after all

Distance lends enchantment, we are told. Now that I frequent the courteous calm of the Upper Chamber, I sometimes read the accounts of "The Government in Disarray" with puzzlement. All in all I should have thought the Prime Minister had some reason to enjoy the first Christmas of his second administration with quiet satisfaction. And when the Treasury ministers gather for a working weekend next month at Chevening (as I trust they will carry on an excellent new tradition), the prospect confronting them should be the most cheerful since 1979.

Consider the record. When the Treasury scrutinized the entrails at the end of 1982 we were told that our international accounts would be just about in balance in the year ahead. Inflation was expected to rise a bit in an annual rate of 5 per cent. And output was forecast to grow by a modest 1½ per cent. Most of the rival soothsayers were inclined to rubbish these predictions as wishful thinking (although the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, described by its admirers as the "most prestigious" of the outside forecasters, did stick its neck out with a promise of a £5 billion payment surplus).

On output and on prices only the Liverpool Economics Faculty was more optimistic than the Treasury - and that is usually dismissed as a bunch of monetarist nuts. Most of the others were far more pessimistic. Yet it now looks as though output actually grew almost twice as fast as the Treasury predicted, and inflation somewhat less than a comfortable payments surplus of at least £1½ billion seems assured.

Now Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor, is predicting 3 per cent growth next year and a further fall in the rate of inflation. Unemployment at long last shows signs of falling off, while our overseas sales seem to be gathering momentum (and it is fascinating to see how an industry like the shoemakers, who only 12 months ago were said to be facing extinction unless we shut out imports, are now taking on labour to meet demand - much of it for export).

Admittedly the CBI fears that recovery will falter later in 1984, and most of the academic and stock-brokers' forecasters, more downright, accuse the Treasury of cockeyed optimism. But perhaps they should reflect on how their tips turned out for 1983.

So what is all this fumbling of which our masters stand accused? That they contrived to upset everybody over Grenada, infuriating the Atlanticists by dissociating themselves from the American invasion, while promoting the anti-Americans by declining to denounce it? But in 12 months' time will anybody remember what Grenada was about?

As for the allegation that Mrs Thatcher mishandled the Parkinson affair, I suspect that many people would prefer to look at a colleague in trouble rather than the old English humbugs sucked by Fleet Street.

It is said that her attempt to restrict MPs' salary increases immediately after the election to something like those for public service workers was doomed to failure, and therefore foolish to embark upon. Doomed to failure maybe, but out of touch with public opinion, I doubt.

On the labour front, we now have some Acts of Parliament which have worked the way they were meant to, and not blown up in the face of those who drafted them. That, in such a prickly area, is no mean achievement.

Certainly some high hurdles lie ahead in 1984. We shall do well to get away without a monumental bust-up (or another botched-up, short-term, and expensive compromise, which would be almost as bad) in the EEC. Without a freeze on the present American lines, the oil price could still collapse and make a monkey of the Chancellor's arithmetic. Even without that, it looks as though he will have to have another go at public spending - or else confound the sceptics by raising taxes after all. If he is in earnest about eliminating inflation. Incidentally, if one could offer him a New Year resolution it would be to reflect that, in government, it is sometimes wiser to pursue the ball and not the man, even if the man in question is a vexing cabinet colleague.

And I suppose we shall have ructions about the attempt to prevent the towns' hall bureaucrats stifling local enterprise to maintain their payrolls.

But when one reflects on how good a prophet George Orwell might have proved had things turned out differently on June 9, there's a good deal to be thankful for as we say farewell to 1983.



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THE SOVIET OVERVIEW

After Mr Andropov's failure to appear at Monday's meeting of the Soviet Central Committee it is becoming increasingly difficult to imagine that he will ever regain the political power he had a year ago. Even if he makes a physical recovery, which it will be regarded as temporary and fragile. The entire Soviet apparatus must therefore be trying to position itself for the succession. Yet Mr Andropov remains president and party leader and has managed to get some of his supporters promoted, so he remains a force to be reckoned with. Since those who have been promoted by him will not wish to lose their jobs they will do their best to see that he remains in office as long as possible, even if it means ruling from his sickbed.

His speech, read for him at the meeting must therefore be seen for the moment not only as a defence of his own achievements and plans but also as a valid statement of policy by the collective leadership now in power. Whether or not it was written personally by Mr Andropov it carries his authority and also presumably speaks for those around him who would wish to succeed him.

It is especially interesting for the urgency it attaches to improvements in the economy. It even goes as far as to say that because the international situation has been aggravated by "aggressive imperialist circles", implementation of the economic plan for 1984 has become not just an obligation but also "a patriotic duty of every Soviet person". The appeal to patriotism, rather than only to ideology, is reminiscent of Stalin's similar appeals during the Second World War, and indicates the level of the economic challenge, which the leadership perceives to be facing the country.

Mr Andropov says that "all our efforts in the economy are aimed in the final analysis at ensuring a rise in the living standards of the people". Nevertheless, it seems likely, especially in view of his patriotic appeals, that he is also concerned about the effects of slow economic growth on his country's defences. The link is made explicit in the recent CIA report from Washing-

ton that revised earlier estimates of Soviet defence spending. Previously the CIA had estimated that Soviet defence costs, measured in constant 1970 roubles, had been growing at a constant 4.5 per cent a year throughout the 1970s and were likely to continue at that rate into the future. Since economic growth would remain at around two per cent a year the military sector would be taking an ever larger proportion of resources, causing growing strain and intensifying the need for a choice to be made between civilian and military needs.

Now the CIA says that the rate of growth of military spending slowed down after 1976 and has remained at about two per cent a year since, or roughly at the same level as economic growth. The main reason is that procurement of military hardware - the largest category of defence spending - was almost flat in this period. Practically all major categories of Soviet weapons were affected, including missiles, aircraft and ships. At the same time costs for operations, maintenance and personnel continued to rise.

Selective quotations from the report will doubtless be seized upon in the West by critics of current levels of defence spending. This will, however, distort the message. The CIA is very careful to say that its estimates are "not a sufficient basis to form judgments about Soviet military spending" and that anyway, "despite somewhat slower growth in recent years, the costs of Soviet defence activities still exceed those of the United States by a large margin. In 1981 the dollar costs of Soviet defence activities were 45 per cent greater than the US outlays; procurement costs alone were also 45 per cent larger. A comparison of rouble prices alone shows that Soviet defence costs were 25 per cent higher than those of the United States". The report is also cautious about the reasons for the slow-down in growth, suggesting that "it seems related to a combination of complex factors including technological problems, industrial bottlenecks and policy decisions".

The new estimates therefore have only marginal relevance to the debates on Western defence spending. Nevertheless, they are interesting because they suggest that the transfer of resources from the civilian to the military sector stopped around 1976 and has not resumed. In other words, Soviet defence spending is for the moment geared to economic growth instead of outstripping it. One of the implications for the Soviet Union may be that the Soviet military now have a direct interest in economic growth. In their eyes, of course, this is not the same as fundamental economic reform, which could weaken central allocations in favour of the market, thereby threatening their share of the cake, but they may now feel more obligation to lend their political weight to the search for efficiency and growth through modest changes and tighter discipline, instead of feeling, as they may have done in the past, that their own requirements would be met regardless of the condition of the rest of the economy.

Meanwhile the lesson for the West may be the opposite of that drawn by some critics of defence spending, namely that we shall have to cope with roughly the present level of Soviet spending for some time because it is causing marginally less strain than was previously assumed. Certainly there are no grounds for hoping that economic stress in the Soviet Union will solve our problems for us. As the CIA concludes: "Despite its problems the USSR is not on the verge of economic collapse. The Soviet economy is the second largest in the world, with a large and literate population, a huge industrial plant, and an enormous endowment of natural resources. Moreover, a highly centralized, rigid system of administering the economy enables the leadership to mobilize resources to focus on key objectives. The USSR has found ways to muddle through periods of economic difficulty in the past, and it will do so again in the 1980s. We emphasize that economic growth is likely to continue - not at the rapid pace of this year but at a trend rate of about two per cent a year. We would also note that the strains on the Soviet economy may be somewhat less than we thought a year ago".

FRIEND MEETS FOE

The pontificate of this Pope resembles the frescoed history painting of a great hall; a progression of tableaux each sharp in the historical detail of its subject matter, and each charged with a universal significance. "The Polish Pope kisses his native Soil", "Rome comes to Canterbury", "He blesses the wild Boar in the Vineyard of the Lord", "The Supreme Pontiff in Colloquy with his Assassin".

The Pope pronounced Christian forgiveness of his assailant within a few days of the attempt on his life in St Peter's square. Now the two men have looked each other in the eye; two souls within the compass of God's love, as one at least of them confesses. The theory which threaded the crime through a Bulgarian connexion to the Soviet KGB and its former head Mr Yuri Andropov has not won greater credence with the passage of time. But if any force remains in it, the Pope was in converse

yesterday with the whole conspiracy as much as with its agent. What passed between them is not known. The symbolism of the encounter is the greater for that reticence.

"I am the enemy you killed, my friend." In Wilfred Owen's imaginary escape from battle "down some profound dull tunnel" to the hall of Hell, friend and enemy are one and the dead man knows who thrust the bayonet by his frown. No enmity remains. "Let us sleep now."

The poet reconstructs the moral frame in which the titanic war between the powers was set, and subverts it. The pity of war and the cess of war come to haunt the imagination of his surviving contemporaries and part of a younger generation, and conditioned their responses. In the case of his mentor Siegfried Sassoon a similar poetic sensibility turned him from staunch combatant to pacifist even while the fighting continued.

The Pope's personal encounter with Mehmet Ali Agca is at one with his generalized Christ-maslike messages to the rulers and peoples of the world. His mind is plainly troubled by the way he sees the world to be going: the denial of justice, recourse to violence, enmity between nations and ideologies, the piling up of armaments. He too seeks to reconstruct the moral frame in which the conduct of international relations is set.

The human force at his disposal is his power to command attention and speak to the common hopes and anxieties of mankind. His gift for dramatic symbolism stands him in good stead. Rulers will watch him warily, for the paradoxes of the Christian life in its application to the affairs of nations are challenging yet, even after all the disappointments of the secular history of Christendom.

CHOOSING THE SELECT

Nineteen eighty three has been a poorish year for the accountability of government to Parliament. The reason, ironically, is elections, two of them to be precise. The announcement of the general election unavoidably extinguished all the select committees in mid-investigation, some of which were promising, such as the Foreign Affairs Committee's examination of Falklands policy, the Defence Committee's inquiry into positive vetting, the Education Committee's review of public records. The second election, that of the Labour Leader, should have had nothing to do with the select committee system. But the Opposition refused to nominate members for the all-party groups until the Foot succession had been resolved, an example of party convenience prevailing over national interest.

After a further delay of a few weeks, while the minor parties struggled to increase their complement, the select committees are now in the process of starting up once more after a gap of seven months which has brought pleasure only to those in Whitehall hankering after a quiet life. There are some cheering auguries for the committees in the second Parliament of their existence. There has been no shortage of MPs competing for places. The membership of most

reflects a healthy balance between seasoned committee men and new arrivals with fresh perspectives. The committees have been given a definite fillip by Sir Douglas Wass, the 1983 Reith Lecturer, who confessed that as Permanent Secretary to the Treasury in 1979 he was an apprehensive sceptic but now regards them as one of the "most important and exciting" of recent political developments.

Yet their resurrection has been accompanied by a sense of unease largely associated with the Government's successful attempt to foist Mr Humphrey Atkins, the former Northern Ireland Secretary and deputy foreign secretary, on the Defence Committee as its chairman. A degree of compassion is in order for Mr Atkins who cannot relish being seen as Mrs Thatcher's "poodle". Last summer she let it be known she would be pleased if he was chosen as Mr Speaker. Mr Bernard Weatherill got that job. This month her Chief Whip, Mr John Wakeham, spent an evening exerting heavy pressure on the Tory caucus in the Defence Committee until he persuaded them that Mr Atkins should emerge as chairman after the next meeting of the committee in January. There is something unsavoury about this parliamentary postscript being treated by the Government as job-creation schemes for ex-

Cabinet ministers approaching their political Indian summer.

Mr Wakeham is a brilliant wielder of the patronage weapon. It is only to be expected that prime ministers and chief whips will apply the blower of the political arts to any area where they sense potential trouble that might be defused. Though, in a reasonable world, a majority of 144 seats might induce a little more sang froid. The blame partly lies elsewhere in the Atkins affair - with the Conservative members of the Defence Committee. If they could have agreed on either Mr Michael Bates or Mr Michael Marshall as an alternative to Mr Atkins, the Chief Whip's blandishments would have been in vain. Mr Wakeham saw a split and exploited it.

Matters, however, could end happily. The other select committee chairmen, who together comprise the backbenchers' shop stewards group, officially known as the Liaison Committee, can easily prevent their chairmanship falling into the hands of Mr Atkins. For his part, Mr Atkins has a sure way of ridding himself of his poodle-shaped stigma. As chairman of the Defence Committee he can conduct himself with spirit and tenacious independence. Mr Wakeham may yet regret his evening of heavy pressure.

Pressing query on Scott Lithgow

From Professor James Pickett
Sir, Questions about the Scott Lithgow crisis may be asked of British Shipbuilders, of local management, certainly of the workforce, and of Britoil. The most pressing question, however, is whether the Government's passive attitude is well founded.

Here it is not sufficient to note, with Mrs Thatcher, that the shipyard's record is abysmal. An ability to compete in the market for deep-water oil rigs would be in the national economic interest. Government consequently has a responsibility to be certain that Scott Lithgow cannot be brought to competitiveness before abandoning it. It should also be willing to accept that reliance on market forces is not the only route to economic efficiency.

There are three positive elements in the present situation. First, many believe that the shipyard has made substantial progress in acquiring the managerial, technical and labour skills needed to compete in a difficult market; second, encouragement may be taken from a managerial and productivity experiment which has enabled a Greenock marine engineering firm recently to complete an engine for Cunard in less than half the time it was wont to take (*The Times*, December 19, 1983); and, third, the desperation inherent in the situation gives the Government enormous clout. It will seldom have a better opportunity to enforce competitiveness.

In the circumstances, the Government should immediately offer conditional aid, making it clear that vastly improved efficiency is the main condition. The aid could be in the form of a grant for the 300-day margin apparently allowed for in the Britoil contract. This would be in part self-financing through moneys saved on redundancy and unemployment benefits. It would also give all at Scott Lithgow a chance to show their pace, at least postpone the legal battle between British Shipbuilders and Britoil, and provide time for the Government to determine - expediently and expensively - the best conditions which have to be met if the yard is to be internationally competitive.

I believe that some such approach would be better for my town and our country than protracted inaction. Yours sincerely, JAMES PICKETT, Director, David Livingstone Institute of Overseas Development Studies, University of Strathclyde, McCaig Building, 16 Richmond Street, Glasgow, December 21.

Combating Sinn Fein

From Mr L. C. Bailey
Sir, What an unnecessary pother is being created over the possible proscription of Sinn Fein! All that is needed is that every electoral candidate be required to declare before acceptance that he will neither incite nor advocate the use of violence in pursuit of political aims, or in any attempt to undermine constitutional government.

The onus of legitimacy in a democratic state would thus be placed squarely upon those who aspire to power within it. We should not then be faced with the absurdity of electing to democratic government those whose prime concern is its destruction. Yours sincerely, LAWRENCE C. BAILEY, 19 Sharnham Cross Road, Solihull, West Midlands.

Justice for ratepayers

From Mr Roland C. Rench
Sir, I am increasingly astonished by people such as Sir Jack Smart, Chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities who, when rejecting the Government's case for rate-capping, frequently refer to "the democracy of local government".

How can the present system possibly be regarded as democratic when millions of individuals with incomes above the national income-tax liability threshold make no direct contribution to their local councils (in the same way as ratepayers) yet are able to enjoy the luxury of representation without paying a penny? Naturally they couldn't care two hoots about the financial implications of hare-brained schemes espoused by some councillors or empire-building aspirations of the bureaucracy.

Not only would rate-capping prove unnecessary, but equity and justice in the raising of local government will only be achieved when the domestic rating system is abolished and replaced by a local income tax system. A detailed and convincing argument for not so doing has yet to be made public by this Government. Yours sincerely, ROLAND C. RENCH, 8 Minshall Place, Park Road, Beckenham, Kent.

Navy cuts

From Mr Patrick Duffy, MP for Sheffield, Attercliffe (Labour).

Sir, Rodney Cowton's report (December 2) of the "Navy's success in postponing the rundown of its fleet of destroyers and frigates" does not alter the underlying downward trend which disquieted most members who spoke from both sides of the House in the Navy debate on November 28.

Since that debate, written answers to parliamentary questions reveal that only three destroyers and seven frigates are currently on order, that only six frigates have been ordered since May, 1979, and three of these are replacements for vessels lost in the South Atlantic, whereas five frigates and one destroyer are to be withdrawn from the active fleet during 1984 and six frigates in 1985.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When workers sink in the poverty pool

From Dr K. V. Roberts

Sir, Certainly a standard minimum wage has all the disadvantages outlined in your leading article of December 20. Nevertheless, if it were merely abolished with nothing put in its place the likely consequence is that wages in some occupations would fall below the bare subsistence level.

There is no natural barrier against this because the wives and dependent children of those who already have a well-paid job constitute a pool of labour that can afford to work for low wages; indeed below a certain level their wages attract no income tax.

A family that at present relies entirely on social security has no such option, however, since any additional income received by one of its members incurs an effective tax rate of around 100 per cent. Surely there is a better and less divisive long-term solution? The protection of a minimum wage without its attendant disadvantages could be achieved quite simply by distributing a basic subsistence income to all individual resident citizens. The level would depend only on age and be independent of other financial resources.

This basic income would replace most existing transfer payments and many tax allowances. It would enable a host of restrictions to be safely removed, including the minimum wage, and a genuinely free labour market would eliminate that evil, but where you have no organization, no parity of bargaining... you have not a condition of progress, but a condition of progressive degeneration." (Hansard, April 28, 1909.)

Although there are, surely, readers who will expose the weakness of much said by you, the greatest weakness is your failure to address yourself to the moral issue you have raised. Sir, you owe it to your readers and the previous high standards of your newspaper to restore some balance to your arguments by explaining how an adult would in 1983 suffice on a weekly rate even lower than £60 a week, the current norm of Wage Council rates, to which bonuses and overtime make little difference. Yours faithfully, J. M. ABBOTT, President, The Retail Book, Stationery, and Allied Trades Employees' Association, 7 Grape Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2, December 23.

From the President of the Retail Book, Stationery, and Allied Trades Employees' Association
Sir, Owners of slaves on the cotton plantations and employers of children in the coal mines would have been delighted had they been alive to read your first leader on December 20 ("Price for the job"). Fortunately for western civilization all those in our society who have sought to justify the exploitation of

labour have been defeated ultimately by the moral imperatives that underlie the fact that "labour" is our neighbour.

In the case of wages or the "price for the job" the moral imperative has been amply expressed: "...the justice of a socioeconomic system deserves to be evaluated by the way in which man's work is properly remunerated", said the present Pope in his encyclical letter, *Laborem Exercens*. He goes on to say: "Just remuneration for the work of an adult who is responsible for a family means remuneration which will suffice for establishing and properly maintaining a family and providing security for its future."

The "right to a fair remuneration" is embodied in the European Social Charter and the Committee of Independent Experts has proposed that this is defined as a level of 68 per cent of the national average wage... "workers receiving less than this amount would not be considered as receiving a fair or decent remuneration."

In our country in 1909 Winston Churchill said: "It is a serious national evil that any class of his Majesty's subjects should receive less than a living wage in return for their utmost exertions" - words as relevant now as they were then. In the light of your leader it is apposite to continue this quotation: "It was formerly supposed that the working of the laws of supply and demand would naturally regulate and eliminate that evil, but where you have no organization, no parity of bargaining... you have not a condition of progress, but a condition of progressive degeneration." (Hansard, April 28, 1909.)

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Frozen funds for MSC

From Mrs Anne Aldrich and Mr Graham Patric

Sir, The recent freeze on funds for Manpower Services Commission community programmes defies logic or understanding. This has been acknowledged as a successful MSC scheme, developed from the previous Community Enterprise Programme, and area offices have been active in recruiting sponsors to set up projects and agencies catering for long-term unemployed people.

Now not only new schemes but those seeking renewal for a further year are "frozen" for an unspecified time, leaving sponsors and workers, without warning, in shocked, bitter and disillusioned uncertainty.

Many community programmes like our own have been constructed to employ disadvantaged people who had been left at the end of the queue for jobs. We have employed young adults with a history of psychological problems in a craft workshop setting where their rehabilitation has been unquestionably advanced by the acquisition of skills and working relationships resulting in increased self-esteem.

We have earned the backing of the relevant local union, employers' association, councils, mental welfare organisations, as well as that of our

customers. A team of gifted supervisors are now disbanded with the workforce.

The community programme scheme is known to have good returns for its expenditure, has filled places successfully and produced schemes of community benefit all over the country. It has given employment, developed skills and increased opportunities to acquire permanent employment.

The Youth Training Scheme, on the other hand, has had problems in getting off the ground and is acknowledged to be underpinned by a large margin. Is it beyond the bounds of possibility (or logic) to transfer suspect millions from the budget of an unproven and less successful scheme to an established and successful one?

If the Government releases further funds eventually for the community programme sponsors will be hard to find the second time round. The abandonment of schemes in a programme of such potential reduces their credibility to vanishing point.

Yours faithfully, ANNE ALDRICH, Director, GRAHAM PATRIC, Chairman, Castle Project, 2 Benet Place, Lensfield Road, Cambridge, December 14.

Puzzle for Orwell

From Mr A. T. Lynam-Smith

Sir, Your leader (December 17) wisely drew attention to the danger of diverting local government of real responsibilities.

Having just returned from the USA, I was struck by the difference in attitude towards local government. There they refer to "our" schools, "our" chamber of commerce, etc. In this country we only refer to "the" schools.

It is ironic that, in 1984, a Conservative government intends to reduce further local responsibilities with the consequent apathy on the part of local communities and increase in state control. George Orwell would have cause to be puzzled.

Yours faithfully, A. T. LYNAM-SMITH, Sunningwell House, Sunningwell, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, December 18.

Captain Cook's end

From Lieutenant-Commander Lloyd W. Barnes

Sir, In a travel article entitled "Aloha, hula and goodbye to an Hawaiian odyssey" (December 17) you refer to the exploits of Captain James Cook in the history of the Hawaiian Islands. In particular, you report that Captain Cook was killed on the beach near the now-famous Diamond Head; presumably you mean Waikiki.

I beg to differ. Captain Cook was slain at Kealahou Bay on the big island of Hawaii on February 14, 1779. This location is far away from Diamond Head, which is on the island of Oahu.

A monument has been erected to Captain Cook at Kealahou Bay and this monument is visited and maintained regularly by officers and men of the Canadian Navy.

Yours aye, LLOYD BARNES, Canadian High Commission, Defence Liaison Staff, MacDonald House, 1 Grosvenor Square, W1.

emasculation of the Royal Navy is the drastic and continuing decline of our Merchant Navy. Our merchant fleet has declined almost 3.4 million gross registered tons and at least 140 ocean-going ships in the past year to put us eighth in the world league; and 5,000 officers and men are leaving the sea every year.

Thus ministerial assurances that the "merchant fleet remains capable of meeting defence needs in emergency" also lack conviction. Adequate numbers of these men and their ships are every bit as essential as modern destroyers and frigates if the resupply and reinforcement of Western Europe is to be served without lowering the nuclear threshold.

Yours sincerely, PATRICK DUFFY, House of Commons, December 19.

A fairer deal for sugar-growers

From the Bishop Suffragan of Warwick

Sir, I am grateful to discover that someone else is concerned about the level of European sugar production. Every time I have tried to raise the issue I have been told that it is too complex for anyone but the expert to understand.

Sir Robert Kirkwood (December 7) expresses the anomaly in its simplest and starkest form: why impoverish Third World importers by producing our own sugar?

He might have added that we can grow other crops, but even if the Caribbean countries were persuaded to diversify, they do not have the capital resources to do so. Their dependence on sugar-growing is largely the consequence of European intervention in the past, and having helped to populate these countries through the slave trade, we have since the War forced them to reexport the children of the plantations by denying them an adequate market for their labour at home and their sugar abroad.

Apart from the understandable desire of European farmers to profit from a readily-saleable beet crop, the only reason I have understood for our apparent selfishness is that we learned from two world wars the danger of dependence on imports of basic foodstuffs.

Does Sir Robert - or anyone else - accept that we in Europe must grow more than half our sugar, whatever the cost to us and the Third World, in case we are subjected to a future sea blockade? Yours faithfully, KEITH WARWICK.

Warwick House, 9 Armorial Road, Coventry, West Midlands, December 7.

Charities and the state

From Mr H. E. Bell

Sir, The arguments in your leader of December 17 ("Charitable giving and taking") against Government subsidies to charities are overwhelming. How much better and more effective to make individuals' donations to charity tax-deductible as in the USA, Canada and elsewhere, providing a necessary incentive to donors.

American generosity, which you praise, is not without self-interest in this respect. In Britain at present public money is being withdrawn from universities, for instance, without any real hope of their making up the difference. The tax lost by such a change might well be offset by the saving on grants to voluntary bodies.

Yours faithfully, H. E. BELL, Senior Assistant Registrar, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, Berkshire, December 19.

Deaths of kings

From Mr Oliver Gillie

Sir, Bernard Levin's attempt to rewrite British history (December 22) does not do him credit. Argumentation about the normal human life span is no substitute for facts when considering how our last four kings died. In 1971 I revealed in *The Sunday Times* (Magazine, September 4) that our last four kings died of smoking diseases and this has never been seriously challenged by any historian or doctor.

Edward VII started to suffer from bronchitis in his late forties. He was advised by his doctors to smoke less but paid no attention. In his sixties, the monarch became severely short of wind and instead of strolling deer had to have them driven to his gun. He was 68 when, still a smoker, he died of a heart attack.

George V also suffered from severe bronchitis for a large part of his adult life. In 1928, aged 63, he suffered from an attack of pneumonia, which would have killed anyone without expert medical attention.

George VI, who smoked 40 to 50 cigarettes a day, did not only die (aged 56) of lung cancer but started to suffer from obstruction to the circulation of the right leg at the age of 52. He had to have an operation to cut nerves - a sympathectomy - to save the right leg.

Edward Duke of Windsor, who was briefly Edward VIII, narrowly escaped death in 1964 when he was operated on for an aneurysm of the aorta - a common consequence of heavy smoking. Eventually he died, eight years later, aged 77, of cancer of the throat.

The seven serious diseases suffered by the four kings - two cancers, two severe arterial problems, two chronic bronchitis and a heart attack - are all common consequences of smoking and led to their demise. If they had not smoked and had died of old age these Kings might reasonably have been expected to live into their eighties.

Yours sincerely, OLIVER GILLIE, Medical Correspondent, *The Sunday Times*, 61 Dartmouth Park Road, NWS, December 22.

Personality change

From the Reverend Canon J. G. Grimwade

Sir, I find it surprising that you give only four lines to the statement in today's *Times* (December 21) that if there were a chance to be anyone else, Mrs Thatcher would choose to be Mother Teresa.

If this is how the Prime Minister feels it implies an immense change in the Government's health and social policies in the coming year.

Yours faithfully, JOHN GRIMWADE, The Rectory, Stonesfield, Oxford, December 21.

COURT AND SOCIAL

Forthcoming marriages

Dr M. Abbott and Dr J. Weeks
The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Mr and Mrs Abbott, of Hartford, Cheshire, and Jennifer, eldest daughter of Mr Robert Weeks, F.R.C.S., and Dr Avril Weeks, of Radyr, South Glamorgan.

Mr R. G. Andrews and Miss S. Falkner
The engagement is announced between Raymond Geoffrey, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Andrews, of 32 Dellow Avenue, Folkestone, Suffolk, and Sophia, elder child of Mr and Mrs Richard Falkner, 15 Yarell Mansions, Queens Club Gardens, London, W14 9TB.

Mr R. Liley and Miss E. Hughes
The engagement is announced between Roger, younger son of Mr and Mrs R. N. Liley, of Blythe Bridge, Staffordshire, and Ruth, elder daughter of Mrs M. Hughes and the late Frank Hughes, of Nantwich, Cheshire.

Mr A. S. Mackay and Miss M. Malin
The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Dr and Mrs W. S. Mackay, of Hambledon, Surrey, and Myriam, daughter of Pastor and Mrs A. Malin, of Crissier, Lausanne, Switzerland.

Sergeant Lieutenant S. C. Sheard, R.N., and Miss S. A. Scott
The engagement is announced between Simon, eldest son of Dr and Mrs M. E. Sheard, of Spring Hill Court, Nailsbury, and Sally-Anne, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs A. M. Scott, of Christmas Pie House, Christmas Pie, near Guildford.

Birthdays today
Sir Henry Bland, 74; Mr W. A. Camps, 73; Mr D. C. Carr, 57; Sir Andrew Maitland-Makgill-Crichton, 73; Sir Bayard Dill, 78; Mr T. W. Gould, 69; Mr R. T. Hanesley, 51; Lieutenant-General Sir George A. J. Lord, 71; Lord Justice O'Connor, 69; Mr Simon Raven, 56; Professor E. J. Richards, 69; Lord Salmon, 80; Miss Maggie Smith, 49.

Latest appointments
Mr David Evans, Master of Dulwich College, London, is to succeed Mr Roger Ellis, Master of Marlborough College, as Chairman of the Headmasters' Conference.

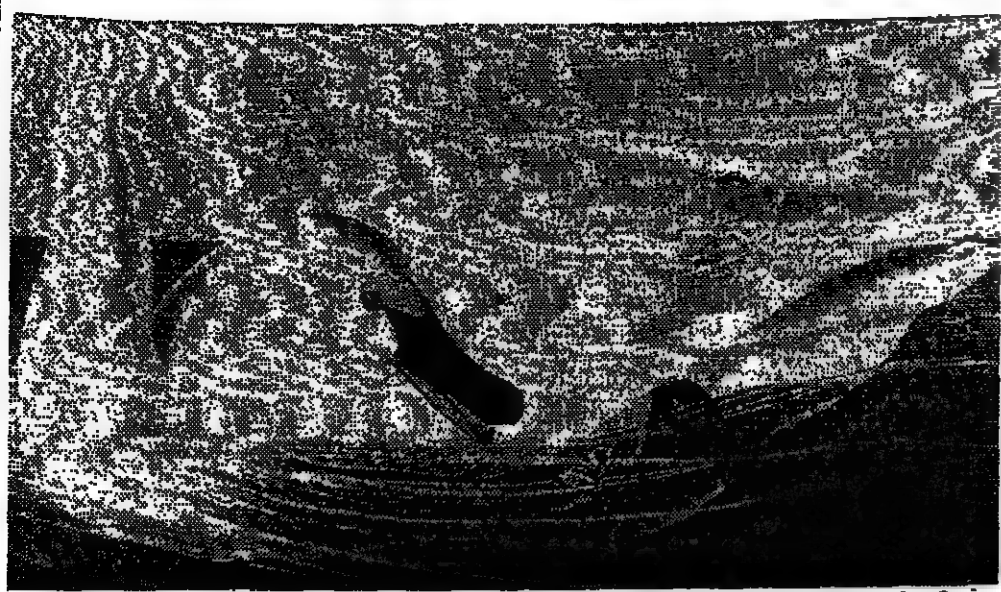
Mr Commander Geoffrey J. B. Clarke to be Secretary of The British Association of Occupational Therapists.

Latest wills
Allen, Mr David Charles, of North Stoke, Oxfordshire, £348,681.
Barker, Mr John Arthur Baldwin, of Aldridge St John, Richmond, North Yorkshire, £213,915.
Ekins, Dorothy Olive, of Warboys, Cambridgeshire, £236,884.
Roberts, Brigadier Charles Douglas, of Frant, East Sussex, £470,235.
Ward, Mr Geoffrey Ernest, of Westcliff-on-Sea, £444,679.
Reiner, Mr Arthur William, of Regent's Park, London, intestate, £365,109.

Murray to help 'Crisis' team
Mr Len Murray, the TUC general-secretary, and his wife will do an eight-hour shift today, serving tea and food and cleaning up at the Crisis at Christmas warehouse in Vauxhall, London, which provides food and accommodation for the homeless.

Among other visitors have been the labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, and the Bishop of Southwark, the Right Rev Ronald Bowley, with their wives. The Christmas event started on December 23 and hundreds of homeless people have gone to the warehouse. On Christmas Day more than 1,000 enjoyed a traditional dinner. The warehouse is open until tomorrow.

Audubon's birds set to lay a golden egg



A selection of hand coloured aquatint plates from John James Audubon's *Birds of America*, the four volumes of which are to be auctioned by Sotheby's on February 1. The books, dated 1827-1838, are likely to fetch more than £1m.



The plates show: (top) trumpeter swan and roseate spoonbill; (bottom) snowy heron, American white pelican, and American flamingo.

Chess tournament goes ahead without Russians

From Harry Golombek, Chess Correspondent

Despite the Soviet Chess Federation's failure to send any players, the fifty-ninth Hastings International Premier Chess Tournament which opens at the White Rock Pavilion today, looks stronger than ever; it includes nine international grandmasters, four international masters, and one FIDE master.

Oddly enough, the replacement necessary because of the last-minute Russian defection have strengthened the Elo rating of the tournament, so that much fine chess can be expected during the next few weeks.

There are two international grandmasters from the United States: Albur and Gurevitch, and an American international master, Kudrin, who has an Elo rating higher than that of most grandmasters.

Other strong grandmasters include Cosm and Sax from Hungary, Fismanik of Czechoslovakia; Suba of Romania; Karlsson from Sweden; and the Britons, Mestel and Spoelman. If the last two are in form they should be strong candidates for the leading places.

There are also two British international masters taking part: Mark Hebden and Nigel Short, as well as the FIDE master Andrew Martin who qualified for the premier by winning the Challengers' section last year. The fourth international master taking part is Ivanov of Canada.

Much interest centres on Nigel Short, aged 18, since it is hoped that he will gain the third grandmaster norm and so become the world's youngest grandmaster.

Cumbrian climbers press on with attempt at Everest

By Ronald Faux

The eight members of the Cumbrian Mount Everest expedition are determined to press ahead with their plans to attempt the West Ridge of the mountain from China next year, without support from the Mount Everest Foundation.

As they packed one and a quarter tons of equipment yesterday ready for its transport to Peking, the climbers dismissed fears that they lacked the experience or the lung capacity to succeed.

Mr David Kay, of Penrith, said: "We believe there is far more involved in high altitude mountaineering than this one question of lung capacity that the foundation, through Mr Michael Ward, is concentrating on. There is the whole issue of motivation and commitment to succeed that is just as important

to climbing the West Ridge of Everest as they are on a Lake District outcrop.

"The decision whether an attempt has become too dangerous must be left to the individual climber on the mountain, not to a committee sitting in London."

The climbers will be submitting to tests by their own doctor which they hope will provide material that will eventually be of use to athletes proposing to compete at high altitudes.

The expedition led by Mr Pat Ginson, of Ulverston, is costing the climbers more than £4,000 each. "Some have taken out second mortgages and others have cashed life insurance policies. But funds from American sources and a grant from ICI have helped to ease the pressure," Mr Kay said.

University news

Albany
Dr Hugh G. Miller, DSc, principal scientific officer, Macaulay Institute for Soil Research, has been appointed to the chair of forestry.

Edinburgh
Professor Robert Ramage has been appointed to the Forbes Chair of organic chemistry, from September 1, 1984. Professor Ramage holds the chair of organic chemistry at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.

Dr Paul F. Bradley has been appointed to the chair in oral surgery from October 1, 1983. He succeeds Professor W. D. MacLennan. Since 1977 Dr Bradley has been a consultant in oral and maxillofacial surgery to North Wales, while retaining research associate status with Liverpool University.

Professor Alastair A. Spence has been appointed to the chair of anaesthetics. The previous head of department, Professor J. D. Robertson, retired in 1982. Professor Spence was formerly head of the university department of anaesthetics. The previous head of department, Professor J. D. Robertson, retired in 1982. Professor Spence was formerly head of the university department of anaesthetics.

Dr G. K. Wilcock, consultant physician, department of geriatric and general medicine, Cardiff Infirmary, Oxford, has been appointed to the chair in care of the elderly.

Dr J. E. Beringer, senior principal scientific officer, Rothamsted Experimental Station, has been appointed to the directorship of the Molecular Genetics Unit.

Newcastle
Grants
Research Council: £27,264 to Dr P. Kendall-Taylor for research into mechanisms of normal growth and development in the normal thyroid gland and in the thyroid gland of children with congenital hypothyroidism.

Professor P. R. Emerson and Dr H. N. Archer to study the role of DNA polymerase II in DNA replication and repair in *Escherichia coli*.

Professor D. G. Armstrong to study genetic mechanism and related milk production studies.

Science and Engineering Research Council: £23,050 to Dr J. S. Marshall and Professor I. Marshall to study lake water quality.

Wales
Honorary degrees are to be conferred on the following:
MA: Mrs Eunice Jones, for her contributions to public life in Wales; Miss Dyddig Owen (education and literature); Mr Harold A. Prescott (public library service).

LL.D: Mr John Francis Burke (cancer research and medicine); Sir Edward Walter Parkes (engineering and services to the financing and administration of universities); Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Youssef (chemistry).

DSc: Professor John Ivan George Cadogan (chemistry and services to science).

D.Litt: Marjorie of Anglesey (public service in Wales and military history); Miss Sian Phillips (arts).

Sheffield
Grants
Research Council: £127,280 to Professor D. A. Walker for studies of chemical aspects of the reaction of chemical species with atmospheric pollutants.

Research Council: £70,000 to Professor R. J. M. Wainman for studies of the chemical aspects of the reaction of chemical species with atmospheric pollutants.

Research Council: £24,559 to Dr R. J. M. Wainman for studies of the chemical aspects of the reaction of chemical species with atmospheric pollutants.

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OBITUARY

MISS VIOLET CARSON

Grand Old Lady of 'Coronation Street'



Miss Violet Carson, OBE, the actress, pianist and singer and, through her playing of the brusque, cross-grained Ena Sharples in the long-running serial *Coronation Street*, one of the best-known faces in television, died on December 26 in Blackpool. She was 85.

She played the character for over 2,000 performances and was last seen in the part which she made very much her own in February, 1980. She was made OBE in 1965, and was an honorary MA of Manchester University. In 1960 the writer Tony Warren engaged in casting the new serial remembered Miss Carson as a "no nonsense" actress he had met professionally when he was 12 and asked her to audition for the part of Ena. "Why," said Miss Carson, "She's a back-street bitch" and the legend was born.

There are television actors and actresses who seem to disappear almost completely into the roles they play. Violet Carson meant unjustly less to millions of television viewers than the formidable, aggressive Ena Sharples of *Coronation Street*. The hair tightly screwed into a hairnet or obtrusive curls, the admirable punctuality with which she responded to the licensing laws, her exhorting tongue, her inability to keep her nose out of other people's business, her readiness to offer advice disguised as flagrant aggression or to offer flagrant verbal aggression without the aid of a device, these were Ena Sharples, the reality.

Miss Violet Carson (the "Miss" was obligatory, as it was for Gracie Fields, whenever she was called to appear in independent television's *Stars on Sunday* to dispense religious words and high intentions) never really challenged the splendid monster that Miss Carson and a number of clever script-writers had created for her to embody.

This, of course, was anything but a very talented entertainer-pianist, actress and singer.

Violet Carson was born in Manchester, the daughter of a Scottish miller, in a street which might, we are told, stand as a model for the later *Coronation Street* itself. Her parents were musical and saw to it that she played the piano - her sister took up the violin - to such effect that at the age of 15 she became pianist with the orchestra of a Manchester cinema.

Married in 1926, she was widowed two years later and returned to the piano, playing in cinemas and at small concerts and social evenings to earn her living.

HERBERT van THAL

Herbert van Thal, man of letters, publisher, editor, anthologist and writer, died on December 23 at the age of 79.

Herbert Maurice van Thal was born in London in 1904, and educated at St Paul's School. His whole life was dedicated, in one form or another, to books; and the justest epitaph for him is certainly that he was one of the last keepers of standards in the popular field in which he made his living.

He was very well read, especially in Victorian literature. Lunch as his guest at the Reform Club with him was invariably, for a fellow author, a treat: old-fashioned courtesy, helpful advice, and good conversation about books.

Van Thal had been a literary agent. For some time after the Second World War he managed a publishing company, Home & Van Thal. In more recent years he was best known as an editor, particularly of the *Pan Horror Stories* series, in which hundreds of thousands of readers received the benefit of his legendary wide reading and his refusal to select pulp fiction.

When this project ceased, van Thal invited the editor of a similar series under the auspices of a different publisher to lunch in order to hand over to him the list of books he would have added to his own series, and to talk about 19th century novels. Such was the man's generosity and love of books.

He was also editor of Cassell's *First Novel Library*. His own books included *The Top of the Mulberry Tree* (1971), *Belloc: A Biographical Anthology* (1970), *London: A Biographical Anthology* (1973), and *The Music Lover's Companion* (1971).

Herbert van Thal was married to the former Phyllis Mary Bayley. He was one of the last genuine "bookmen", and as such, and for his gentility, modesty and wide knowledge, he will be sadly missed.

PROF. J. van LOUWZEN de LEEUW
A correspondent writes:

Friends in many countries will be saddened to learn of the sudden death of Professor Johanna (Joan) Engelberta van Louwzen de Leeuw at the age of 64. She was one of the leading European historians of Indian and Southeast Asian art.

Joan van Louwzen was an indefatigable traveller and worker. Her interests and researches led her to all the countries of South Asia and to many of Southeast Asia. During 1983 she made no less than three short excursions to Gilgit, Ladakh and Indonesia. She took on a tremendous burden of teaching and many undergraduates and research students have reason to be grateful to her. She gave unstinting help and advice to students and colleagues alike.

She had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the art history of South and Southeast Asia: her judgment and authority on works of art of all periods were extraordinary. She was well known as a lecturer throughout Europe and from 1954-61 was a visiting lecturer at the Sorbonne.

She was born in Amsterdam and studied at the universities of Leiden and Utrecht. After holding posts at Groningen and Utrecht, she was from 1951-59 University Lecturer in Indian

whenever there was better available.

He edited the Doughty Library for the publisher Anthony Blond in the 1960s; this reprinted readable Victorian classics, and, in particular, it made Wilkie Collins's novel *No Name* available to a new generation of readers.

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Rubbish tips become a gull's delight

By Hugh Clayton, Local Government Correspondent

The link between the reorganization of local councils almost 10 years ago and the amount of damage since done to aircraft by "birdstrike" is not obvious. But research by government scientists into the habits of seagulls has shown that it exists.

It concerns rubbish dumps, which provide happy hunting grounds for the birds. The scientists, who work at the Weybridge Laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture, have given a graphic description of an existence which is as worrying for airlines as it is agreeable for the birds.

"Gulls spent much of the day at looting sites, usually in one large flock, resting, preening and bathing where water was available. Looting sites generally commanded a good all-round view." Some large inland council dumps are now visited by thousands of happy birds, which may have travelled thousands of miles to feast on the heaps of refuse.

But seagulls are also responsible for 42 per cent of the British cases of "birdstrike", in which a bird can be drawn into the engine of an airliner. Human lives have sometimes been lost in the ensuing accidents.

Inland rubbish did not attract gulls until householders were persuaded to put it in dustbins instead of throwing it out of their back doors. Municipal dumps started to attract complaints about gulls more than 50 years ago.

The reorganization of local government in the early 1970s led to a rationalization of refuse disposal in which dumping was concentrated on a smaller number of larger sites. The larger the heaps, the more the gulls flew down to feed on them. One of the counties abolished at that time was Middlesex, which included London's Heathrow airport.

The ministry scientists concentrated their gull studies on an area to the south and west of the airport. They marked some of the gulls found there and some of those birds were later seen as far away as Switzerland, Finland and Poland. Their study showed that a single large council rubbish heap could influence the feeding habits of thousands of gulls.

If such a tip was closed, the birds would disappear not only from its site, but also from smaller feeding grounds near

by such as playing fields and sewage works. The scientists found that the birds were not easily dislodged from the "superabundance of food" that awaited them on the tips. "Calls often fed very close to the working bulldozers as it levelled and compacted refuse."

The gulls, which were once hardly seen for inland, now pose a significant hazard in a country such as Britain where the Government expects demand for air travel to grow. But the birds are consistent in their habits. They follow the same routes to their rubbish dumps year after year, and they may fly more than 20 miles across Britain from roost to feeding site.

It is, therefore, possible when planning a new rubbish dump to calculate the likely routes and numbers of the gulls that will be attracted to it. In areas near airports, therefore, the habits of gulls must be considered when councils make plans for establishing rubbish tips.

The Journal of Applied Ecology, December, 1983 (Blackwell Scientific Publications, Osney Mead, Oxford), annual subscription £38.50.

THE ARTS

The Arts Council must now renounce the faith of 40 years' work and adopt an altogether different role for the future. Bryan Appleyard investigates the threat - and the promise A time for philosophy, but not for battle

It was a year in which the Arts Council finally decided it had to reach its fortieth birthday in 1985 with a degree of dignity.

Until 1983 the old orthodoxy prevailed: public subsidy of the arts should increase annually, cash should be ready to "respond" to new developments, centres of excellence would spread across the nation while the quality of the fringe was preserved. In essence the Council was the primarily passive purveyor of the old welfare benevolence.

But for years the cash squeeze had been intensifying. Money had stopped increasing, although the entire strategy of the Council dating back to the first chairmanship of Keynes was based on growth. Vast investments in bricks and mortar had to be serviced, but at the same time the continuous clamour on behalf of new projects had somehow to be damped down.

It was primarily an organizational problem which could not be solved simply by resorting to campaigns for more cash. Such campaigns were inevitably weakened by the spectacle of the effects of public spending cuts elsewhere - opera and ballet have

always had trouble opposing their claims to those of the medical profession for kidney machines. Yet still the left demanded Tory blood: the arts were socially desirable activities which a wicked Government was trying to crush. The subtle changes which took place in the relationship between the Government and the Council in 1983 were once again reduced to rows about more or less cash.

What the Left should have understood and the Council now finally seems to have taken on board is that the Government does not want to cut money to the arts. Its mood has changed from indifference to mild enthusiasm. Efforts are being made to compile real statistics to show what really goes on. Total turnover figures for the arts and all

peripheral industries have been put as high as £3-24,000m.

The initial inspiration for this change was the Select Committee Report published in 1982. The seriousness with which this took the arts as an industry and badge of national prestige began to turn the tide. It became clear that, far from simply being another unacceptable drain on the public purse, the arts had some splendid Tory virtues. They stimulated all kinds of markets and they offered a tangible "weight" to our national image.

Then along came Clive Priestley with his scrutiny of the Royal Opera House and the Royal Shakespeare Company. This was the Select Committee's ruminations made flesh, right down to the cost of understudies at Covent Garden. With

almost unseemly relief the virtues of the arts were endorsed and with enthusiasm the two companies were given more or less clean financial bills of health.

The Arts Council was all but speechless - not least because both reports had edged towards demanding radical changes in its own position. Both thought it was too centralized and both suggested it should have less overall control over the flow of funds to the national companies. When the Government's reorganization proposals - for the local authorities came along, requiring major changes in the funding of the directors of dozens of companies, the penny finally dropped. The Council had to go with the flow or risk a fight that it could not win. A new orthodoxy had to be adopted.

This began with the consultative programme drawn up at Ilkley and involving all the Council's annual clients. The next phase was the negotiation of the total grant for 1984-85, which was announced last week. The key to this was to exploit the Priestley enthusiasm by raising extra money for the ROH and the RSC, and the regional opera companies. And there was no small overall increase.

Several things have not yet been spelled out. First the ROH and the RSC will be expected to implement the handful of Priestley recommendations during 1984-85. Thus in 1985-86 they will probably receive no further increase as the economies will be expected to account for inflation. Also less overall cash will be available to the rest of the clients

because the Council will be holding a larger reserve than usual - perhaps £1m in excess of £250,000. And this is where the grand strategy comes into effect. By March, just before the beginning of the new financial year, the results of the Ilkley consultation will be known. A policy will be evolved which will help some companies rather than others: there will always be some foundering on financial rocks. Those favoured in the policy will be rescued by the larger reserve fund, those not will have to sink or keep afloat without further aid.

That takes the Council up to March 1985, when the entire Ilkley strategy can be implemented. A new, improved client list will be announced. In addition the much-recommended decentralization will take place as a

result of Government moves to draw local authorities into funding those companies left out of the "national importance" list in the plans to disband the top tier councils. With luck these moves will come out in March 1984, providing Lord Gower and the Council with a large and very positive package of innovations.

But blood will be split fairly steadily over the next two years. There will be insouciance next year and many howls of protest in 1985. Yet in the long term the restructuring may result in more money and more companies. Certainly, if the decentralization side works, it will lead to more sustained pressure for greater artistic equality across the regions.

Meanwhile the Arts Council will be able to get on with its rather more dignified role of grand strategist, lobbyist and philosopher to the world of subsidized culture. It should move out of the heat-pit into rather more refined surroundings and it will also mean fewer staff. Overall the cost of abandoning the faith of the first 40 years will be high: the Council should console itself with the thought that the cost of not doing so would be higher.

Galleries in Los Angeles

Collectors in exciting context

There has been talk of the need for a museum of modern art in Los Angeles for almost as long as there has been of the need for a definitive Hollywood museum. At present it seems that the museum of modern art will make its first, at any rate, the Temporary Contemporary has opened in the Little Tokyo district just east of Downtown and the Music Centre - a slum area which is in the midst of a spectacular facelift and artification, with new SoHo/Wapping style loft galleries appearing every week.

The Temporary Contemporary has been surrounded by a blaze of publicity which leaves the locals eager to visit and desperately vague about exactly where it is: finally I found a policeman who knew because it is housed in what used to be the major downtown police garage. The space is spectacular: high and open, covered by a great single-span ceiling supported here and there with diagonal struts which have been cunningly made into quasi-sculptural features, and still retaining mysteriously mouldering pulleys and other possibly movable parts which are not always easy to distinguish from the sculptures of Kienholz, Stella or Beuys strategically placed beneath. It is planned that this shall be the home of MOCA (it seems appropriate that conversationally MOMA in New York is a looming maternal presence, while MOCA in Los Angeles sounds like a flavour of ice cream) for two years, until its permanent home, designed by Arata Isozaki for nearby Bunker Hill, is ready.

For outsiders the First Show at MOCA (until February 19) is likely to be rather less exciting than the context in which it is placed. The emphasis is for once primarily on the collector: eight collections have been drawn upon, all formed between 1940 and 1980, and each representing a different stratum of taste. Some, like the Schreiber collection, are firmly based on artists who emerged in the modernist classicism of the 1950s - Pollock, Stael, Giacometti and so on - while others bring the story right up to date, with the Panza di Biumo collection strong on the conceptual and minimal, and the Seachis showing primarily from their holding of Transavanguardia/Zeitgeist artists like Chia, Kiefer, Clemente and Schnabel. The result is that we are given a quick conspectus of what has been going on in the arts internationally for the last four decades as well as an intriguing insight on the ways that collecting taste develops. If the Temporary Contemporary can keep up this standard until it moves into its permanent



German Expressionist eye-opener: Youth Rising from the Dead by Milly Steger

home, it should be guaranteed knowledgeably and enthusiastically open to the public in 1985 or thereabouts. Meanwhile, though there seems to be no reason why any kind of competitive situation should exist, the County Museum has been put on its mettle, and has come up with a really epoch-making show: the first major exhibition anywhere in the world devoted exclusively to German Expressionist Sculpture (until January 22).

Coming in the wake of a number of ambitious shows devoted to Expressionist painting and to individual painters of the movement, this show is bound to seem, at first blush, like a minor annex, a footnote. It may be interesting to read if you can be bothered to turn to the back of the book. But that would be radically to underestimate it.

We probably know that many of the Expressionists interested themselves in more than one art-form: so it is no great surprise to encounter sculptures by artists we know best in other media, though it may well be surprising to find how confident and expressive are the sculptures of, say, Nolde, Kollwitz or Kirchner, or even that Schmidt-Rottluff emerges as an infinitely more interesting

sculptor than painter, with a particularly personal and accomplished use of applied colour. But the real eye-opener of the show is the work of those who specialized in sculpture to the virtual exclusion of other forms. We have heard of Barlach and Lehmbruck (though chances of seeing their work in the original are not necessarily so frequent), but who knows anything much (or anything at all) about artists such as Wilhelm Wauer, shown here with a number of brilliant, conventionalized portrait heads, or Milly Steger, whose few surviving sculptures suggest that she was the most talented of the several talented women represented, or the short-lived Hermann Scherzer, whose large painted wooden figures carry further and most powerfully the Expressionist preoccupation with the effects of African and Oceanic carving?

All of these artists come fresh to us, often with much more important surviving works, and the collection, superbly displayed, is usefully supplemented by parallel graphic works and photographic records of the missing and destroyed.

John Russell Taylor

Anthony Masters discovers just how much theatrical London is missing

Critical need for the enjoyable sense of occasion

No slight to London, but the best single thing about progressing from theatre addict to theatre critic is the discovery, at first hand, of the dramatic pleasures outside the capital which you always knew were there. Only critics, agents and management scouts have the privilege of seeing London, pampered as it is with a wealth of West End and fringe theatre, in context - and then only partially. Reports from friends in places like Ipswich and Derby suggest that we miss a good deal by not seeing how well the humbler companies do. Ayckbourn, the odd Shakespeare, *Educating Rita* or even *Ben*, but there are also bigger events to grab the attention. Michael Elliott production of *Ibsen* in Manchester, Arthur Miller and Arnold Wesker premieres in Birmingham, striking new plays about Richard II (Exeter) or football (Southampton), or a Howard Barker political blockbuster in Sheffield.

Only one of those "major events" has so far come to London. The West End's increased reliance on imports from out of town is obvious enough: handsome Chichester transfers at the Haymarket, *Daisy Pulls It Off* from Southampton, *Dear Anne* from Birmingham, as well as contributions from Hampstead, the Hammermith theatres, Greenwich, the King's Head and (of course), Broadway. But too much that is good in British theatre outside London never travels even a few miles.

When the National's cutbacks ended its regular use of the Lyttelton and Cottesloe as intermittent transfer houses in 1977, it was not only the end of a crucial connexion - in the Lyttelton's case - with foreign theatre which carried the torch from Peter Daubeny's World Theatre Seasons at the Aldwych and had already, in only two years, brought visits from Nuriya Esfer, the Berlin Schaubühne, and the Theatre National Populaire. It had also picked plums from other British theatres - Shakespeare and Ben Jonson productions by Stuart Burge from the Birmingham Rep, *Illuminatus* from Liverpool, *shibubys* by the Manchester Library and the Leicester Phoenix, to say nothing of the Glyndebourne *Don Giovanni*.

As a consequence, London's taste of regional quality is now more and more restricted to what looks commercial. Some transfers, like *84 Charing Cross Road*, achieve the success they deserve; others, like *When the Wind Blows* or *Nuts* or Mike Harding's delightful *One Night Stand*, fail to survive. But the really big fish get away altogether.



Jonathan Hackett and Sally Cookson (left) in the Royal Exchange's *Wild Duck*, more successfully cast and satisfying as a whole than anything London could manage; and Anna Keaveney and Miles Anderson in Bristol Old Vic's *Love for Love*, a major play unperformed in London for almost 20 years

The classics, for example. Alan Badel in Sartre's comedy *Kean*, a decade ago, was rightly judged a good commercial bet for Shaftesbury Avenue, but it arrived without his equally interesting performance as *Othello*, which ran aptly in tandem with it at the Oxford Playhouse. Now that classical productions at the National and the RSC seem to come increasingly from a small circle of transfers whose waits and personal stamp (and in some cases shortcomings) are already familiar, we need more than ever the shock of the new. Bristol Old Vic's dark and serious 1979 revival of *Love for Love*, a major play unperformed in London for almost 20 years, brought together a then unfamiliar director (Adrian Noble), excellent designs and actors like Miles Anderson and Sheila Ballantyne at their best: the result was a highly individual production calculated to remain in the memory ever since.

Similarly, Michael Elliott's production of *The Wild Duck* earlier this year at Manchester's Royal Exchange, with Ian McDiarmid and Jonathan Hackett more successfully cast and satisfying as a whole

than either the National or the Lyric, Hammermith, could manage with the same play. Here, of course, one feels the loss of the Round House, whose special relationship with the Royal Exchange brought transfers, in the last few years, of some exceptional work including the Vanessa Redgrave *Lady from the Sea*, *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Family Reunion*. Recent visits to the Royal Exchange suggest that it is going through a poor patch just now. But London should have seen that *Wild Duck* - which could only have been staged in the round - and the Round House's demise, even if some sort of resurrection is impending, also cuts off budding connections with other major theatres like the Glasgow Citizens' (not, however, at their best when they came) and Alan Ayckbourn's company from Scarborough.

Even more important, those escaping "big fish" I mentioned earlier include a valuable number of large-scale new plays. The combined capability of the brave Royal Court, a few other theatres like the Half Moon and Greenwich, and the National and RSC for staging ambitious large-cast premieres

does not add up to much. London missed its chance with *Just a Kiss in the Grass*, finally staged at Southampton after Bromley was foiled at the eleventh hour. And with *Two Planks and a Passion*, a subtle, amusing and buoyantly original historical play commissioned by the Northcott at Exeter.

Unlike a London impresario, the director of a theatre outside

London will know his audience intimately, sometimes as ruefully, as his own family and his eye will be firmly fixed on it. Sometimes that is a frustrating limitation: few theatres can escape their due tribute to Agatha Christie and canny comedies. But it can also provide a sense of function and purpose: perhaps staging work of local interest, often historical, like the Vic at Stoke-on-Trent or indeed the RSC's unforgettable *The Tiller* this summer at Stratford-upon-Avon; perhaps (and this really should be compulsory) giving a vivid production of each year's O-level and A-level Shakespeare play which will pack the house.

Of course many out-of-London productions are not the same even if they do come in. *Blood Brothers*, which looked so crude and tatty down here, clearly would have had more atmosphere and significance in Liverpool even if it had not had the ecstatic full houses there that it did in fact enjoy. Oldham, despite being an awkward place to get to and offering the traveller little choice in hospitality (Mr Ronay's indefatigable inspectors recommend no establishment to stay or eat in), has the warmest, most appreciative atmosphere I have found in any theatre - the friendly, excited feel of the Richmond Theatre is the nearest the London area can offer. But, after a hilarious evening there with Bill Tidy's *The Great Eric Artyoid Disaster*, I doubted whether even that product would travel.

The alert sense of occasion which is ready for enjoyment but not uncritical: that is what I miss in London audiences (every night of the week, not just the artificially hysterical first-nighters) and that is what we need, as much as all the good productions London is missing out of town. How do we get it?

Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet

Sadler's Wells Theatre

Christmas Season

29 December - 14 January

20, 30, 31 Dec
Coppelia
9, 10, 11, 12 Jan
Choréo
13, 14 Jan
La Boutique fantasque
15, 16 Jan
Elise Sycoraxes
17, 18 Jan
Paquita/Prodigious Son
19, 20 Jan
Pineapple Poll

Even 7.30, Sat Mat 2.30 Tickets £2.50-£10

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John Piper

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Piper is perhaps best known for his romantic landscape painting, but his work in stained glass, ceramics, fabrics and theatre design, now shown together for the first time, fully demonstrates his versatility.

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Admission £1.50 Weekdays 10-5.30 Sundays 2-5.30
Recorded Information 01-621 7128 Closed 23-24 December and 1 January

Tate Gallery

Millbank London SW1

Thames's musical version of Kenneth Grahame's *Willow* in the *Willows*, adapted by Rosemary Anne Sisson and imaginatively animated by Cosgrove Hall Productions, proved once again last night that magic can be safely sought in the classics which, with a little invention - and there was much of that here - can be rewardingly refurbished.

Cosgrove Hall have deservedly won awards for their previous animations and a series of 13 20-minute episodes on *Willows* is in preparation. The models here were excellent and the animation was superb. The composers, Keith Hopwood, former lead guitarist for Herman's Hermits, and Malcolm Rowe, scored it well, seeking appropriate inspiration in the English pastoral themes of Vaughan Williams and, for *Toad*, in the cheekily jaunty

Television Classical magic

It was a pity, Christmas schedules being not all that fertile, that I overlooked another excellent animation on Channel 4 of George Eliot's *Silas Marner* by another prize-winning British animator, Alison de Vere. BBC2 pledged its peak time to the Bard with *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, directed by Don Taylor, who has apparently cherished an ambition to do the play since university. The advance publicity referred to it as a much under-rated play. If that is indeed the case, I thought that this production did nothing to invite re-appraisal.

Coming as it did three days

after *The Comedy of Errors*, it invited comparison and fell further by it. The two gentlemen, John Hudson as Valentine and Tyler Butterworth as Proteus, had much earnestness, which gleamed rather obtrusively from the off-popped eyes of the former, but little conviction. The Berlin Schaubühne's Jones, as the constant Julia and Joanne Pearce as Silvia, did better, inclining one to reflect that maturity may indeed come earlier to the female of the species.

Against the acting and invention of *Errors*, this production paled. Even its sets indicated a lack of investment and the forest looked more like a garlanded waterworks than a refuge for outlaws. Not a good night for poor William.

Dennis Hackett

Hi-de-Hi! Victoria Palace

It is Ugly Bug Ball Night at Mappin's (anything to amuse the happy campers); never quite made-it ballroom dancing champions Barry and Yvonne Stuart-Hargreaves (Barry Howard and Marie Lorraine) wear frothy smilies as Lord Stick-Insect and Lady Praying Mantis, the twins play caterpillars, Mr Ben Warriss (taking over Uncle Benjamin) staggers on as a spider, and doty little Peggy (Su Pollard) temporarily abandons her Omo and Windolene to star as the front legs of a centipede. I cannot remember what started it all, or the past-the-jerry-competition that sends Miss Pollard off in an ambulance with a pot wedged over her curly brows just above the spectacles, but it hardly matters. You know you are among friends.

At its best, Jimmy Perry's and David Croft's writing in the television series has been so good that I hoped they would devise a proper full-length comedy weaving all these great characters together. Not so; maybe next Christmas? This show does wander from one production number to the next with less plot than you would find in a usual half-hour episode, but you seldom notice. The pointsettias and microphones clustering round the Victoria Palace proscenium, not to

Theatre

mention Bert Swanley and the Debonaires, because through 1959 hits, bring holiday-camp showtime at Crompton-on-Sea to life too horribly to allow any but the briefest glimpses of backstage intrigue.

As the long-suffering Jeffrey Fairbrother, Simon Cadell first appears as a latter-day Cambridge archaeology professor nibbling recollections, the mad impulse that briefly led him to launch himself as an entertainment manager among this motley crew. Introduced in quick succession to Miss Pollard's buckets and the throbbing heart of Gladys Pugh (Ruth Hardoc), he brings a creative imagination to bingo-calling ("On its own, 41") but comes into his own presently as Noel Coward singing "Mad Dogs and Englishmen".

That sequence, with all the principals doing yesterday's star impersonations, hardly comes off. But in no time the fledgling comic (Jeffrey Holland), discarding earlier attitudes as a giant sauce bottle or a missionary in a cauldron, reappears as a fairy godmother granting a vision of former jockey Felix Bonness winning the Derby. A tubby, effeminate MC Paul Stue doing his Elvis bit, and the Stuart-Hargreaveses (underused in this show) at the Albert Hall, taking her 862 yards of nylon net and his undone flybustons triumphantly in their stride.

Anthony Masters

January issue...out now

COLLECTORS GUIDE

The January issue of *The Antique Dealer & Collectors Guide* sets the tone for 1984 with its customary variety of articles for the informed collector, from tea table silver to antique car models, plus a directory of Britain's specialist antique collectors' societies.

Also in this issue: Buying pine furniture. The history of Rouen furniture. Victorian sewing cases.

The Antique Dealer & Collectors Guide

Britain's foremost journal for every antique and fine arts lover

GATE

A STAR IS BORN

GATE BLOOMSBURY

THE LEOPARD

ZELIG

GATE MAYFAIR

ZELIG

Stock Exchange Prices

Capitalization and week's change

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings Begin, Dec. 19. Dealings End, Dec. 29. ⁵ Contango Day, Dec. 30. Settlement Day, Jan. 9.
⁶ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.

(Current market price multiplied by the number of shares in issue for the stock quoted)

(Current market price multiplied by the number of shares in issue for the stock quoted)

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THE WEEK AHEAD

US banks may write off some foreign loans

New York (NYT) The Federal Reserve Board has proposed that American banks be required to write off portions of loans to countries that are in serious financial trouble. Similar proposals are being issued by other federal bank regulators.

Under the proposals, banks would be required to write off 75 per cent of the value of their loans to Zaire, 50 per cent of their loans to the Sudan, 15 per cent to Poland and Nigeria and 10 per cent to Bolivia.

Since total loans by American banks to these nations are relatively small, and since most banks are believed to have already written off portions of them, the proposals would have a small impact on this quarter's bottom earnings. Some officials indicated, however, that the effect might be significant on some institutions.

The proposals call for the banks either to write off portions of loans or to set up reserves against them. As these reserves could not be included in the banks' capital accounts, and funds allocated to such reserves would be subtracted from the banks' earnings, the practical effect of establishing such a reserve would be equivalent to writing off the loan.

But Mr James McDermott, chief analyst for Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, which specializes in bank stocks, said that for this quarter, "we don't look for any material earnings consequences for banks as a whole if the proposals are adopted".

The consequences could have been much greater if the authorities had determined that the banks should write off

SEC appli

Washington (NYT) - The Securities and Exchange Commission has unanimously approved an accounting device to let companies dress up their financial condition and show higher earnings by wiping long-term debt off their balance sheets.

The device, called in-substance corporate defeasance, allows companies to buy government securities to reduce their balance sheet debt by an equal amount. Analysts said the technique would appeal primarily to companies with cash to spare and a lot of low-interest

portions of loans to such financially troubled countries as Brazil and Argentina, where much larger amounts are involved.

But some analysts said the regulators' new thrust might encourage banks to write off troubled international loans more quickly than they have in the past, which could reduce near-term earnings.

ECONOMIC VIEW

Improves interest

"We expect a lot of companies will be doing defeasance transactions," Miss Patricia McCormell, a limited partner and certified public accountant at Bear, Stearns & Company, said.

The technique has caused concern among some accountants and regulators who say that it allows companies to create instant, unrealized profits.

The SEC, concerned about the proliferation of defeasance transactions without a formal auditing by the Financial Accounting Standards Board, temporarily banned the tech-

1987

A big concern of many bankers, however, was that for the first time the regulators are making broad-based credit decisions. Until now, bank regulators scrupulously sought to avoid being placed in that position, although their examiners at times disagreed over the quality of particular credits.

"We have argued philosophically against this approach,"

Test device

Last month, the FASB approved the technique

Under the method, a company seeking to reduce the debt on its balance sheet uses available cash to buy Treasury or government-guaranteed securities. These are then placed in a trust account, and pledged to pay the interest and principal of the debt as it comes due.

The difference between the book value of the debt removed from the balance sheet, and the cost of the securities placed in the trust, equals the likely gain that flows into the company's

said Mr Donald G. McCouch, executive vice-president of Manufacturers Hanover Trust.

But in its press releases, the Fed said that present bank procedures do not always reflect the reduced quality of these credits and do not account for them uniformly. The Federal Reserve stressed that an important reason behind the proposals was to create a uniform system of accounting.

Mr McCouch argued, however, that the regulators were unjustified in treating country credit more vigorously than domestic loans.

The reschedulings of the past 18 months have been unusual, but considering the excellent history of the credit quality of foreign loans, the singling out of sovereign credits for special treatment is not justified, he said.

The regulators had little choice, however. The proposals were required by the International Lending Supervision Act, which became law on November 30.

The public has until January 11 to comment on the proposals, which the Fed said it expects to adopt by the end of January. But even if the proposals are changed at that time, they would be retroactive.

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ECONOMIC VIEW

SEC approves interest device

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1,550,000	Emery Wdr 3.9%	50
1,275,000	W. M. Wdr 3.9%	50
1,500,000	Milford Dubs	70
2,418,000	Nescon Wdr	100
	Sunderling Wdr	249 1/2

UNLISTED SECURITIES

6,333,000	Air Cast	948
11.35m	Burley Exp	60
41.35m	Cent and Tv RV	173
1.35m	Cornell Eds	120
1.35m	Coe (Gen)	120
3,045,000	Gordon Wdrren	95
3,045,000	Merrygo Wdr	115
3,045,000	W. M. Wdr	115
30.2m	Milford Focus	90
6,410,000	Micro Data	210
1,500,000	Miles 35	210
2,388,000	New Court Nat	45
1,500,000	Overland Corp	45
2,388,000	Parfield Pstry	45
15.2m	Resource Tech	175
15.2m	Securities Wdr	175
26.2m	S.W. Resources	60

* En dividend, * Ex alt, * Forfeiture.
 * En dividend, * Interim payment passed, *
 Division and year-end, * Dividend a spec-
 company, * Pre-payment figure, * A

dividend. c Corrected
 Price at expiration
 d Dividend
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FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

1983 Awards for Business and Related Arts

Few would argue that outstanding performance or meritorious achievement, in any walk of life, should go unrecognized. Sportspeople, entertainers, civil servants, contributors to party funds - all are liberally honoured; but unless they come into one or more of these categories, bankers and businessmen, financiers and men who move markets, tend to be overlooked. Yet who can say their contributions to our lives is less worthy than feats on the running track or stunning parts in costly TV advertisements? The Times Awards for Achievement in Business and the Related Arts are designed to fill a gap, indeed several gaps, including the gap between Boxing Day and New Year's Eve. Our panel of judges is made up of two distinguished people, Dame Rosemary Unsworth and Lord Jonathan Davis, and myself.

The principal award, that for Supreme Achievement, was not too difficult. The judges decided quite quickly that the choice lay between Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton, who became Governor of the Bank of England on July 1st, and Sir Nicholas Goodison, chairman of the Stock Exchange. The panel finally came down in favour of Sir Nicholas, as we felt that with the Prime Minister sponsoring him, Mr Leigh-Pemberton probably had less of a struggle. Therefore, for plucking the Stock Exchange out of the fire of the Restrictive Practices Act, the Supreme Award went to Sir Nicholas.

The panel also thought it right that a Special Mention should go to the Minister responsible at the time for the fire, Mr Cecil Parkinson, who has already been proved a better prophet of the shape of things to come than anyone in the City itself.

Lord Hanson (left), Capitalist of the Year. Sir Campbell Fraser, for rhetoric.

The Capitalist of the Year might easily have been Mr Jeffrey Sterling, who finally rehabilitated Town & City, with a celebratory flourish renamed it Sterling Guarantee Trust; was special adviser to three Cabinet ministers (Mr Patrick Jenkin, Mr Cecil Parkinson and Mr Norman Tebbit, whose ear he still has); and was made chairman of P&O in order to save it from Trafalgar House and Cunard. Both he and Mr Nigel Brookes (Trafalgar House) are certain to be strong contenders for the 1984 award, but this year the panel was unanimous: Lord Hanson is Capitalist of the Year. Hanson Trust's £260m takeover of the UDS stores group is an outstanding deal, in any year. The sale for £130m of UDS's unwanted businesses almost covers the £170m bid Hanson has made for London Brick.

The Poisoned Chalice went to the Midland Bank, whose expensive acquisition of the Crockford Bank in California proved more costly than anyone had feared when it was revealed in December that Crockford had moved into the red. The omens were not propitious when earlier in the year the (unrelated) First National Bank of Midland, a 93-year-old Texas bank, became the second largest failure in American banking history. The panel was convinced however that the Poisoned Chalice would not remain on the Midland's sideboard for more than a year. Competition for the minor awards was fierce and the panel had great difficulty in selecting from several outstanding entries in each category. After hours of discussion and argument, the judges were agreed.

Rhetorician of the Year: Sir Campbell Fraser, president of the Confederation of British Industry, whose own company, Dunlop, signally failed to set an example to the rest of industry and, at year end, was struggling even to stay British. The Golden Handshake: This award naturally attracted a strong entry, with such outstanding claimants as Mr William Fieldhouse (Carrington-Vivella) and Mr Jack Gill, who associated Communications Corporation, still qualified him for this year's award as the final sum is not yet settled. The winner however, by a neck, is Sir John Mayhew-Sanders, who received £180,000 but wanted more when he resigned from John Brown - on the very day this once famous engineering company confirmed that it has made losses totalling £26.7m.

The Most Lamented Departure of the Year is Lord Cockfield's from the Department of Trade where his consistently inconsistent rulings on takeovers and mergers are sadly missed. Runner up is Sir Peter Green, whose spell as chairman of Lloyd's gave "names", the Bank of England, the Inland Revenue and the public at large, their first real insight into the profitable workings of the world's best known insurance market.

Scientist of the Year: Mr Keith Hunt, the portly Warwick commodity broker who disappeared suddenly in April leaving investors who backed his sophisticated scientific analysis of commodity markets wondering if they had lost £5m. Flop of the Year: The Telejor pub video deal, which was intended to provide



Robin Leigh-Pemberton (left), runner-up to Supreme Achiever Sir Nicholas Goodison.

exclusive in situ saloon bar coverage of Football League matches for the nation's pubgoers, but failed to get off the ground, sending shares of London and Liverpool Trust, Telejor's operators, tumbling from a peak of £3.50 to just 24p. Runner up: The Nimble camera, the 3D technological miracle that signally failed to impress photographers.

Misjudgment of the Year: the decision by Sir Denis Mountain, chairman of Eagle Star, to recommend acceptance of BAT Industries' 575p a share offer only days after he rejected, correctly, a rival bid from Allianz as "derisory".

Silver Lining Award: This also goes to Sir Denis Mountain, whose acceptance of the first BAT bid failed to prevent Eagle Star receiving two rival bids of 675p, with the market expecting still more. Sir Denis's own shareholding has risen in worth from £2.01m to £3.07m in just two months.

The Take over Artistry Award: Mr Owen Green, whose company BTR's audacious £6.50m bid for Thomas Tilling was brilliantly judged and executed. For its part in this campaign, Morgan, Grenfell is Merchant Bank of the Year.

The Most Original Takeover Tactic Award went, unanimously, to Mr Graham Llewellyn, former chief executive of Sotheby's who threatened to blow his brains out if the unwanted bid from the American carpetbaggers Messrs. Cogan & Swid or "Bubble and Squeak" as Christie's called them, succeeded. The panel decided to overlook the fact that Mr Llewellyn admitted later: "I was only bluffing".

The award for The Most Expensive Business Lunch goes to Mr Ernest Potter, finance director of Cable & Wireless, whose eve-of-the-issue lunch with brokers Scrimgeour, Kemp-Gee was widely credited with the unexpected flop of the Government's £275m Cable & Wireless share sale in November. The wine and cigars alone, probably cost the Treasury that is the taxpayers, up to £25m of the anticipated proceeds.

The Easiest Money Award goes to Mr John Aspinall and Sir James Goldsmith, whose highly profitable casino Aspinall's Club lifted more than £12m profit from a handful of rich foreign gamblers and offered stage their safest bet for years when shares in the club were offered on the stock market.

The runner up who as a consolation receiver a special Self-denying Ordinance Award: Mr Stanley Grinstead of Grand Metropolitan, which had to take five times as much in bets from its casino patrons to make three times as much money as Aspinall's and yet nobly and successfully argued before the Monopolies Commission that any increase in Grand Metropolitan's influence over the casino world would be against the public interest.



Sir Denis Mountain (left) takes two honours. Science award for Keith Hunt.

The Misplaced Optimism Award: goes to Mr George Helsby, chairman of Burnett & Hallamshire, who predicted "further substantial growth" in his chairman's statement in June. Three months later, Mr Helsby retired through ill health. The company's interim profits were halved and the share price dropped from a peak of 435p this year to 135p.

The Miracle Award goes to Mr Robert Maxwell for taking Oxford United into the Quarter finals of the Milk Cup and raising the British Printing Corporation, now BPCC, from the dead.

The judges were left with just two more awards. The Saying of the Year, especially as this award was sponsored by the Fleet Street branch of the Society of Builders (SOB) finally went to Lord Matthews for: "My views on the importance of honouring agreements are well known."

The Non-Event of the Year resulted in a triple tie: The panel found it impossible to distinguish between the International Banking Crisis, the collapse of Opec and a takeover bid for either Tricentrol or Burmah.

The judges' decisions are final and they regret they cannot enter into correspondence on the awards.

Mr John Hignett, outgoing director general of the City Takeover Panel, says it is planning to simplify its rulebook next year. In an interview with The Times Mr Hignett said that work has started on simplifying the 81-page rulebook.

He said that a reworked rulebook, setting out the City's code on takeovers and mergers, will contain an easy-to-understand index and explanatory paragraphs at the beginning of the section which deals with the 41 rules.

Mr Hignett, who returns to Lazard Brothers, the merchant bank, as a managing director of the corporate finance department after 24 years with the panel, also promised that there will be some amplification in the panel's next annual report of its view on consortium bidding. This follows the controversy

over the bid by Mr Michael Ashcroft, chairman of Hawley Group, for Cope Allianz, the packaging and leisure company. The panel allowed Mr Ashcroft to proceed with a tender offer for Cope to give him 29 per cent of the shares even though he had previously acted in concert with Mr David Watkins, chairman of British Car Auctions, who held 13 per cent of Cope's shares.

Critics feared that Mr Ashcroft would effectively control 42 per cent of Cope if the tender offer succeeded despite a panel assurance that no concert party existed.

Mr Hignett said that the panel took the view that each allegation that a concert party existed should be investigated separately. He said that it would be wrong for the panel to set an arbitrary time limit during which a concert party is

assumed to exist after a bid has lapsed. He said that the concert party might break up the next day, or the next year. But the onus must be on members of the consortium to prove that it no longer exists.

Mr Hignett said that his successor, Mr Timothy Barker, aged 43, a senior member of the corporate finance team at Kleinwort, Benson, had a challenging year ahead. Next year Mr Hignett predicts that there will be more American-style arbitrage in bid situations.

Mr Barker will continue the work which Mr Hignett began in combining the roles of director general of the Takeover Panel and of the new Council for the Securities Industries, which is intended to become the

ultimate watchdog of City affairs. Early next year the council must act on the findings of the Gower Report on investor protection. Negotiations with the Department of Trade and Industry over the implementation of EEC directives on Stock Exchange affairs are also at an advanced stage.

The reelection of Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone as Japan's Prime Minister followed by the quick formation of a new government pushed share prices on the Tokyo stock market to a record high for the second day running yesterday, according to dealers in Tokyo. The market added 37.37 points to reach a record close of 9,883.94 after rising 141.73 the previous day. At one point in early trading the average stood even higher, at 9,901.45.

US lender to open UK office

By Our Financial Staff

Financial Corporation of America, the largest savings and loan association in the United States, is setting up a London office to sell its own certificates of deposit to European investors.

Savings and loan associations are broadly similar to British building societies.

Financial Corporation will use the London office as another way of funding its own mortgage lending on residential property in the United States. But it hopes eventually to establish a European market in secondary mortgages of the type that exists in the United States.

In the United States, mortgages can be sold as tradable securities. As mortgages have a known life, yield and good backing, they have been snapped up by the big pension funds as investments.

No such market exists in Britain but Financial Corporation, whose shares are quoted on the London stock market, hopes to introduce one in a few years. The new market will be in US mortgages to begin with because British building societies would find it exceptionally difficult to sell on their own mortgages.

Financial Corporation recently sold £2.6 billion (£1.75 billion) worth of mortgages in the United States to improve its liquidity, thus setting a record in size of deal.

WALL STREET

Recovery hopes lift Dow

(New York (AP-Dow Jones) Stocks were sharply higher in early trading yesterday as market watchers saw the beginning of a year-end rally that could last into 1984. Trading was moderate.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose nearly eight points to 1,258. Advancing issues were 7-10-4 ahead of declines.

"This week is traditionally a good week for the market," according to Mr Malcolm Wilson, vice president and director of equity research for the Provident National Bank. "The flash economic figures last week indicated that the economy is slowing to a level the Fed can live with."

"We feel the weakening in the market has reached an end. General Motors was up 1/4 to 74 1/2. Eastman Kodak rose 1/4 to 76. IBM was up 1/4 to 124 1/2 and Teledyne climbed 1/4 to 162."

Solid State rose 1 1/4 to 7. Penn Central was unchanged at 37 1/2 and Mattel was up 1/4 to 5 1/2. Penn Central said it would exercise its option to buy 52 per cent of Solid State from Mattel at \$6.11 a share and would seek to buy remaining shares for the same price in a merger.

Among gaining issues, Calco rose one to 21 1/2 to 127 and Motorola one to 134 1/2.

Financier quits property deal

By Jeremy Warner

Mr Tom Whyte, who rose to prominence in the City in the early 1970s, has decided to pull out of the US property deal which was to have helped Thames Investment & Securities out of its difficulties.

Thames Investment & Securities was one of the securities companies to join the Unlisted Securities Market.

Yesterday Mr Whyte gave no reason for refusing to go through with the agreement signed in October to take over Thames Investment's part in a property development in Miami, Florida.

Thames recently announced a near £5m loss and a big boardroom shake-up after experiencing difficulties with the \$20m (£13m) Miami deal. Thames became involved in the venture at the beginning of the year when it entered into an

agreement with City National Bank of Miami to buy the property to develop it with a joint partner.

But the joint partner refused to go ahead with the development leaving Thames unable to meet the \$20m obligation to City National on its own. It was at this stage that Mr Whyte was brought in to allow Thames to withdraw from the obligation and all related professional fees.

Whether there is a contractual obligation on Mr Whyte to take over the development is unclear. The reasons for backing out will be released shortly, Mr Whyte said yesterday.

Thames has already written off its financial exposure to the Miami development. However, Mr Whyte's withdrawal appears to mean that the company will not get back the \$650,000 of deposits and costs already

incurred on the project. Mr Whyte's withdrawal would also appear to mean that a payment of about \$750,000, already written off against the accounts, will become payable. It appears that Mr Whyte's refusal to go through with the agreement cannot further harm the financial position of the company which recently appointed Touche Ross, a leading accountancy firm, to examine its position. But it does mean that sizeable clawbacks on provisions already made will now not take place.

The agreement with Mr Whyte was interlinked with a deal under which the former chief executive of Thames, Mr Joseph Benjamin, was given rights to a fifth of the venture's profits.

Mr Benjamin's continuing interest in the Miami venture would appear to be jeopardized.

Trade mark delays worry retailers

By Derek Harris, Commercial Editor

Threatened delays on extending trade mark protection to the service sector could mean heavy legal bills for retailers which could have been avoided.

The Retail Consortium, which represents more than 90 per cent of Britain's traders, is carrying out a survey to see how far the services sector is at risk. It is also pressing the Government to change legislation quickly to avoid anomalies under prospective EEC changes; and to strengthen administration of trade marks to tackle a backlog on existing trade marks.

The Trade Marks Act 1938 allows only for registration of names for goods. It means services, typically a shop name, can only invoke common law protection by taking to court anybody adopting the same or similar name. This can be disproportionately costly.

Because there is no registration of service marks it is difficult to check on their use by others. EEC regulations on trade-mark protection, now planned, would only extend protection where there is complementary legislation in a member country.

A private Member's Bill introduced by Mr Stephen Dorrell, Conservative MP for Loughborough, aims to extend the 1938 Act's protection to service marks. It has just had its second reading in the Commons but it is queuing for committee stage time.

Although the Government has indicated its support in principle for extending the scope of the existing Act, the consortium has been warned that a heavy backlog of registrations could mean a delay until 1987 before the service sector could be brought within the scope of the Act.

But the consortium argues that additional staff in the trade marks administration could be taken on five months' notice, pending ceilings. It says fees charged for registration could make staff expansion self-funding.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ECGD set to back China loan

Britain is preparing to extend its first £1 billion export credit loan to finance a GEC deal with China for a nuclear power plant.

Formal negotiations between the British company and the Chinese authorities are scheduled to start on March 15, probably in Guangdong province where the station is to be built.

The GEC, as supplier of turbines and generators and prime contractors for the British part of the plant work, could double GEC's own previous best when it secured a £500m order for the Castle Peak B power station in neighbouring Hongkong three years ago.

The plant, at Daya Bay, will cost a total of £2.1 billion, with the French group Framatome supplying two pressurized water reactors.

Full details of the British financial package will not be known until the GEC talks are complete but a framework has been almost completed by J. Henry Schroder Wagg, the company's merchant bank advisers.

Although Britain's Export Credits Guarantee Department is expected to ensure the £1 billion buyer credit, the Bank of China is thought ready to act as a guarantor for the loan.

A "huge" coal deposit has been discovered in Indonesia, according to the Korean Mining Promotion Corporation which said yesterday that the "high quality soft coal" deposit, estimated at 683 million tons, had been found in the Pasir field in Kalimantan. The reserves are worth an estimated \$11.3 billion at the current market price (£7.8m).

The Korea-Indonesia Resources Development Corporation, a consortium of four groups, would begin mining the coal in 1986.

Shoe industry increases workforce by 3%

By Our Commercial Editor

The number of jobs in footwear manufacturing has risen nearly 3 per cent in just over six months as the recovery in sales has continued, according to the latest survey of the industry's trends by the British Footwear Manufacturers' Federation.

But the survey adds that imports are increasing at a greater rate than improvement in sales has continued, according to the latest survey of the industry's trends by the British Footwear Manufacturers' Federation.

There are also signs of an increase in cost of raw materials which could signal price increases in the shops after showing only marginal rises so far this year.

The survey says that 600 jobs were created in September and there was an overall increase in this jobs of 1,500 since last February.

Employees in British foot-

wear manufacturing now total 52,300. A fifth of whom are now working overtime.

British shoemakers' deliveries are still at last year's levels but volume orders were up 1.4 per cent in October, with a five-month improvement of 7.2 per cent. Imports in October were up 7.7 per cent in volume although the five-month improvement at 2.6 per cent.

Italy, the biggest exporter, has shown a marginal decline during the first 10 months of the year but among other big exporters, Taiwan has registered a 60 per cent increase. Values of imports have risen sharply because more leather-uppers footwear is now coming in. This could be a threat to the British manufacturers whose strongest sector is more up-market.

Allianz and BAT to talk

Talks are expected to begin today between Allianz Versicherungs of West Germany and BAT Industries in a last-ditch attempt to end the deadlock over their competing 675p share takeover bids for Eagle Star, Britain's sixth largest insurer.

There has been nothing to date to indicate that the two sides will be able to reach an accord, and unless another party enters the battle to control this week, they will be forced by the City Takeover Panel to fight it out in a last-minute auction on Friday, December 30.

STOCK EXCHANGES

Friday's close and change on week

FT Index	775.0
FT All Share	83.15
Bargains not available	
Dataseq USM leaders	
New York: Dow Jones	Average: 1250.1
Tokyo: Nikkei Dow Jones	Index 9,684.17
Hongkong: Hang Seng	Index 867.0
Amsterdam: 157.8	
Sydney: AO Index	22.2
Frankfurt: Commerzbank	Index 1031.7
Basel: Generali	Index 136.44
Paris: CAC Index	153.8
Zurich: SKA Generali	312.0
unchanged	

CURRENCIES

Friday's close and change on week

LONDON

Sterling	\$1.4330
Index	52.5
DM	3.2600
FF	12.0850
Yen	335
Dollar	Index 130.3
DM	2.7565

NEW YORK

Sterling	\$1.4345
Dollar	DM 2.7585

INTERNATIONAL

ECU	£0.571481
SDR	£0.728708

INTEREST RATES

Domestic rates:	
Bank base rate	9%
Finance houses base rate	8 1/2%
Discount market loans week	fixed 9%
3 month interbank	9 1/4-9 1/2%
Euro-currency rates:	
3 month dollar	10 1/4-10 1/2%
3 month DM	6 1/4-6 1/2%
3 month FF	13 1/4-13 1/2%

GOLD

London fixed (per ounce)	
am	\$379.50 pm
close	\$379.75-380.50 (£285.50-286)

New York

\$380.30	
Kruggerand (per coin)	
\$381.50-393	(£273.75-274.75)

BOARD MEETINGS

TODAY	- Interims: Bernina International Bond Fund, Energy Finance and General Trust (amended), London Private Health Group, RTD Group Finance None.
TOMORROW	- Interims: Dolar Photographic, Stavert Zigom, Philips None.
FRIDAY	- Interims: Arbuthnot Dollar Income Trust (interim dividend), H. J. B. None.

Base Lending Rates

ABN Bank	9%
Barclays	9%
BCCI	9%
Citibank	9%
Consolidated Creds	9%
Continental Trust	9%
C. Hoare & Co	9%
Lloyds Bank	9%
Midland Bank	9%
Nat Westminister	9%
TSB	9%
Williams & Glyn's	9%

* Mortgage interest rates

1 year deposits and overdrafts: £10,000, 6 1/2%; £25,000 up to £50,000, 6 3/4%; £50,000 up to £100,000, 6 1/2%; £100,000 up to £250,000, 6 1/4%; £250,000 up to £500,000, 6 1/2%; £500,000 up to £1,000,000, 6 3/4%; £1,000,000 up to £2,500,000, 6 1/2%; £2,500,000 up to £5,000,000, 6 1/4%; £5,000,000 up to £10,000,000, 6 1/2%; £10,000,000 up to £25,000,000, 6 1/4%; £25,000,000 up to £50,000,000, 6 1/2%; £50,000,000 up to £100,000,000, 6 1/4%; £100,000,000 up to £250,000,000, 6 1/2%; £250,000,000 up to £500,000,000, 6 1/4%; £500,000,000 up to £1,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £1,000,000,000 up to £2,500,000,000, 6 1/4%; £2,500,000,000 up to £5,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £5,000,000,000 up to £10,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £10,000,000,000 up to £25,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £25,000,000,000 up to £50,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £50,000,000,000 up to £100,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £100,000,000,000 up to £250,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £250,000,000,000 up to £500,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £500,000,000,000 up to £1,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £1,000,000,000,000 up to £2,500,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £2,500,000,000,000 up to £5,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £5,000,000,000,000 up to £10,000,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £10,000,000,000,000 up to £25,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £25,000,000,000,000 up to £50,000,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £50,000,000,000,000 up to £100,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £100,000,000,000,000 up to £250,000,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £250,000,000,000,000 up to £500,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £500,000,000,000,000 up to £1,000,000,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £1,000,000,000,000,000 up to £2,500,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £2,500,000,000,000,000 up to £5,000,000,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £5,000,000,000,000,000 up to £10,000,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £10,000,000,000,000,000 up to £25,000,000,000,000,000, 6 1/2%; £25,000,000,000,000,000 up to £50,000,000,000,000,000, 6 1/4%; £50,000,000,000,000,000 up to £

INVESTORS' NOTEBOOK • USM REVIEW

Bumper trade with light casualties

an eventful 1983. The exchange's bid-ask spread, which has grown to the widest of expectations, was 180, when 11 waves of trading were transferred from the USM to the New York Stock Exchange.

United Securities

United Securities, which has been quoted as the USM covering a spectrum of business activities from neutralizing industrial wastes to beauty competitions and dance studios. In 1980, a total of 23 companies joined the USM followed by 61 in 1981,

and 62 in 1982. This year, the number of entrants has hit 88 and the queue for 1984 is growing. The number of companies taking the step to a full listing stands at 17 and five more companies were taken out by bids. Fears that the high risk reward ratio of the USM would lead to tears have so far proved unfounded, although the real test will come when the Stock Exchange becomes embroiled in a raging bear market.

However, the market had had its casualties. Hesketh, the motorcycle manufacturer; Kerosene, L.O. Technology; and American Communications, all went under. But, by and large, the market has served its purpose to attract small companies and develop them as the first step to a full quote.

The Stock Exchange was quick to realize the need for a second tier to its existing system catering for companies too small to apply for a full listing, but in need of capital investment. It also served to head off the growing number of such companies joining the growing ranks of licensed dealers.

Some of the greenfield companies, which joined the USM naturally, have caused controversy. Namely, the 3-D camera maker, Hesketh, which hit the giddy heights of 275p, only to see it now languish at 23p.

Bio-Isolates has also had its fair share of critics. The shares which were placed at 33p in July last year, hit a high of 425p earlier this year as investors' inspiration was fired with prospects for its process of turning dairy waste into protein. This was despite the fact that the group had never made a penny profit. But with the sudden realization that the expectations had been overdone, the price collapsed overnight and after hitting a low of 63p, were last week trading at around 98p. This resulted in a call for stricter selection of newcomers.

But there have been some rich pickings for investors. Databank has calculated the leaders and laggards for 1983. The best performance of last year went to Top Estates, the property company, which joined the market in January. Broker Quilter Goodson placed 415,000 shares at 10p and has watched as the shares closed on Friday at 80p—a rise of 662 per cent. At this level the entire company is valued at £4m.

Accidentally, stock shortages are responsible for many of the big gains achieved on the USM and until the Stock Exchange raises the minimum amount of equity to be offered above 10

percent the situation is likely to continue. Top's nearest rival is mental health Parkfield, a mental health care company, which, despite a rights issue which saw the shares leap 521 per cent this year to 49p, at which level the group is capitalized at £2.45m.

There is also a strong representation from some of the smaller oil exploration outfits. Bula Resources, currently gaining fame in the Irish Sea, saw its shares improve 413 per cent to a high of 41p, while Saxon Oil managed a 352 per cent gain to 248p this year.

Of the worst performing shares of 1983 the title goes to Breville Europe, the toasted snack machine manufacturer. The 8.5 million shares placed by broker Fielding Newman-Smith at 90p ended the year compared with a price of 111p on January 1—a fall of 72 per cent.

Big is not always beautiful as far as the USM is concerned. Acorn Computers the BBC home computer group, became the largest company to be quoted on the USM in September after a tender of 10 per cent of the equity (1.23 million shares) by merchant banker Lazards and broker Cazenove. The shares offered at a minimum tender price of 120p failed to attract support and after being struck at the minimum price hit a low of 103p.

There was criticism that the issue had been over-priced and that the group's contract to use the BBC name on its computers might be removed. The BBC microcomputers accounts for 95 per cent of Acorn's business and four other companies have now made it clear they will be applying for the contract when it comes up for renewal next August. On Friday, shares of Acorn were unchanged at 121p—just 1p above the opening level in September.

Michael Clark

Fed's freeze stays despite slow growth

Uncertainty about the course of the United States economy next year has not been resolved by the publication of the fourth quarter national income statistics, which showed a marked slowdown in the rate of growth of the economy.

After rising at an annual rate of over 9 per cent in the second quarter and over 7 1/2 per cent in the third quarter, the "real" gross national product rose at an annual rate of only 4.5 per cent in the fourth quarter.

This estimate gave much comfort to the monetarist economists who have been predicting that the Federal Reserve's freeze on banks' reserves—in operation since April—would stifle the recovery.

It was quickly pointed out by supporters of the Fed's policies that much of the deceleration in fourth quarter economic growth was due to the yawning gap in the United States' overseas trade balance, reflected in a very low figure for net exports in the GNP estimates. The Commerce Department also reported, however, that in the fourth quarter a slowdown in the growth of real consumption spending contributed to the overall drop in growth.

What seems clear is that the Federal Reserve officials were entirely unmoved by the announcement, despite another public plea from the United States Treasury—this time from the Secretary of the Treasury Mr Donald Regan—for a more relaxed Federal Reserve policy.

Last Friday the Federal Reserve reported that money M1 fell \$2 billion to \$520.7 billion, a level merely 1.2 per cent greater than in the week of June 14, six months previously. The Federal Reserve also reported that the banks' adjusted reserves in the week of

December 14 fell to \$54 billion, the same level as in the second week of April. Thus, the Fed's restrictive policy is very much in place.

The financial markets have been less than delighted by the prolonged operation of this policy. Bond futures bid fair to end the year at a level represented by about 70 for the March 1984 T-bond contract. This contract peaked in 1983 at 78 in early May. Similarly, the S and P futures have been very weak.

When the issue of the future course of Federal Reserve policy is raised with Wall Street analysts, the view is almost invariably expressed that President Reagan will no doubt soon take the opportunity to tell Mr Paul Volcker, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, that the central bank must ensure that monetarist conditions do not halt the economy's forward progress to a point where the Republican Party's election chances are jeopardized.

President Reagan did appoint Mr Preston Martin to the position of Vice-Chairman of the Fed. However, Mr Martin has proved to be a supporter of traditional Federal Reserve policies.

Even recognizing these errors in the President's handling of the central bank, most Wall Street analysts cling to the belief that there will be a switch in Fed policy soon and that this will bring about a sharp reduction of US interest rates, a sharp drop in the dollar and a rally in the financial markets.

There is no indication whatever from the Federal Reserve that such a policy change is in the works.

Maxwell Newton

Norges Kommunalbank

70% Guaranteed External Loan Bonds
Due February 1, 1987

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the provisions of Section 46(c) of the Fiscal Agency Agreement dated as of February 1, 1972 between Norges Kommunalbank and The Chase Manhattan Bank (National Association), as Fiscal Agent, \$1,380,000 aggregate principal amount of the above-captioned Bonds (the "Bonds") will be redeemed through operation of the sinking fund provision of the Bonds (the "Redemption Date") at the Redemption Price of 100% of the principal amount thereof (the "Redemption Price").

The serial numbers of the Bonds to be redeemed are as follows:

3	854	1677	2814	5408	5982	7596	9995	9947	11006	11818	12786	18569	17426	18688
4	856	1680	2816	5410	5984	7600	9997	9949	11007	11820	12800	18571	17428	18690
5	858	1683	2819	5413	5987	7603	10000	9952	11009	11823	12813	18574	17431	18693
6	860	1686	2821	5415	5989	7607	10002	9954	11011	11825	12826	18577	17434	18696
7	862	1689	2824	5418	5992	7610	10005	9957	11013	11828	12839	18580	17437	18699
8	864	1692	2827	5421	5995	7613	10008	9960	11015	11831	12852	18583	17440	18702
9	866	1695	2830	5424	5998	7616	10011	9963	11017	11834	12865	18586	17443	18705
10	868	1698	2833	5427	6001	7619	10014	9966	11019	11837	12878	18589	17446	18708
11	870	1701	2836	5430	6004	7622	10017	9969	11021	11840	12891	18592	17449	18711
12	872	1704	2839	5433	6007	7625	10020	9972	11023	11843	12904	18595	17452	18714
13	874	1707	2842	5436	6010	7628	10023	9975	11025	11846	12917	18598	17455	18717
14	876	1710	2845	5439	6013	7631	10026	9978	11027	11849	12930	18601	17458	18720
15	878	1713	2848	5442	6016	7634	10029	9981	11029	11852	12943	18604	17461	18723
16	880	1716	2851	5445	6019	7637	10032	9984	11031	11855	12956	18607	17464	18726
17	882	1719	2854	5448	6022	7640	10035	9987	11033	11858	12969	18610	17467	18729
18	884	1722	2857	5451	6025	7643	10038	9990	11035	11861	12982	18613	17470	18732
19	886	1725	2860	5454	6028	7646	10041	9993	11037	11864	12995	18616	17473	18735
20	888	1728	2863	5457	6031	7649	10044	9996	11039	11867	13008	18619	17476	18738
21	890	1731	2866	5460	6034	7652	10047	9999	11041	11870	13021	18622	17479	18741
22	892	1734	2869	5463	6037	7655	10050	10002	11043	11873	13034	18625	17482	18744
23	894	1737	2872	5466	6040	7658	10053	10005	11045	11876	13047	18628	17485	18747
24	896	1740	2875	5469	6043	7661	10056	10008	11047	11879	13060	18631	17488	18750
25	898	1743	2878	5472	6046	7664	10059	10011	11049	11882	13073	18634	17491	18753
26	900	1746	2881	5475	6049	7667	10062	10014	11051	11885	13086	18637	17494	18756
27	902	1749	2884	5478	6052	7670	10065	10017	11053	11888	13099	18640	17497	18759
28	904	1752	2887	5481	6055	7673	10068	10020	11055	11891	13112	18643	17500	18762
29	906	1755	2890	5484	6058	7676	10071	10023	11057	11894	13125	18646	17503	18765
30	908	1758	2893	5487	6061	7679	10074	10026	11059	11897	13138	18649	17506	18768
31	910	1761	2896	5490	6064	7682	10077	10029	11061	11900	13151	18652	17509	18771
32	912	1764	2899	5493	6067	7685	10080	10032	11063	11903	13164	18655	17512	18774
33	914	1767	2902	5496	6070	7688	10083	10035	11065	11906	13177	18658	17515	18777
34	916	1770	2905	5499	6073	7691	10086	10038	11067	11909	13190	18661	17518	18780
35	918	1773	2908	5502	6076	7694	10089	10041	11069	11912	13203	18664	17521	18783
36	920	1776	2911	5505	6079	7697	10092	10044	11071	11915	13216	18667	17524	18786
37	922	1779	2914	5508	6082	7700	10095	10047	11073	11918	13229	18670	17527	18789
38	924	1782	2917	5511	6085	7703	10098	10050	11075	11921	13242	18673	17530	18792
39	926	1785	2920	5514	6088	7706	10101	10053	11077	11924	13255	18676	17533	18795
40	928	1788	2923	5517	6091	7709	10104	10056	11079	11927	13268	18679	17536	18798
41	930	1791	2926	5520	6094	7712	10107	10059	11081	11930	13281	18682	17539	18801
42	932	1794	2929	5523	6097	7715	10110	10062	11083	11933	13294	18685	17542	18804
43	934	1797	2932	5526	6100	7718	10113	10065	11085	11936	13307	18688	17545	18807
44	936	1800	2935	5529	6103	7721	10116	10068	11087	11939	13320	18691	17548	18810
45	938	1803	2938	5532	6106	7724	10119	10071	11089	11942	13333	18694	17551	18813
46	940	1806	2941	5535	6109	7727	10122	10074	11091	11945	13346	18697	17554	18816
47	942	1809	2944	5538	6112	7730	10125	10077	11093	11948	13359	18700	17557	18819
48	944	1812	2947	5541	6115	7733	10128	10080	11095	11951	13372	18703	17560	18822
49	946	1815	2950	5544	6118	7736	10131	10083	11097	11954	13385	18706	17563	18825
50	948	1818	2953	5547	6121	7739	10134	10086	11099	11957	13398	18709	17566	18828
51	950	1821	2956	5550	6124	7742	10137	10089	11101	11960	13411	18712	17569	18831
52	952	1824	2959	5553	6127	7745	10140	10092	11103	11963	13424	18715	17572	18834
53	954	1827	2962	5556	6130	7748	10143	10095	11105	11966	13437	18718	17575	18837
54	956	1830	2965	5559	6133	7751	10146	10098	11107	11969	13450	18721	17578	18840
55	958	1833	2968	5562	6136	7754	10149	10101	11109	11972	13463	18724	17581	18843
56	960	1836	2971	5565	6139	7757	10152	10104	11111	11975	13476	18727	17584	18846
57	962	1839	2974	5568	6142	7760	10155	10107	11113	11978	13489	18730	17587	18849
58	964	1842	2977	5571	6145	7763	10158	10110	11115	11981	13502	18733	17590	18852
59	966	1845	2980	5574	6148	7766	10161	10113	11117	11984	13515	18736	17593	18855
60	968	1848	2983	5577	6151	7769	10164	10116	11119	11987	13528	18739	17596	18858
61	970	1851	2986	5580	6154	7772	10167	10119	11121	11990	13541	18742	17599	18861
62	972	1854	2989	5583	6157	7775	10170	10122	11123	11993	13554	18745	17602	18864
63	974	1857	2992	5586	6160	7778	10173	10125	11125	11996	13567	18748	17605	18867
64	976	1860	2995	5589	6163	7781	10176	10128	11127	11999	13580	18751	17608	18870
65	978	1863	2998	5592	6166	7784	10179	10131	11129	12002	13593	18754	17611	18873
66	980	1866	3001	5595	6169	7787	10182	10134	11131	12005	13606	18757	17614	18876
67	982	1869	3004	5598	6172	7790	10185	10137	11133	12008	13619	18760	17617	18879
68	984	1872	3007	5601	6175	7793	10188	10140	11135	12011	13632	18763	17620	18882
69	986	1875	3010	5604	6178	7796	10191	10143	11137	12014	13645	18766	17623	18885
70	988	1878	3013	5607	6181	7799	10194	10146	11139	12017	13658	18769	17626	18888
71	990	1881	3016	5610	6184	7802	10197	10149	11141	12020	13671	18772	17629	18891
72	992	1884	3019	5613	6187	7805	10200	10152	11143	12023	13684	18775	17632	18894
73	994	1887	3022	5616	6190	7808	10203	10155	11145	12026	13697	18778	17635	18897
74	996	1890	3025	5619	6193	7811	10206	10158	11147	12029	13710	18781	17638	18900
75	998	1893	3028	5622	6196	7814	10209	10161	11149	12032	13723	18784	17641	18903
76	1000	1896	3031	5625	6199	7817	10212	10164	11151	12035	13736	18787	17644	18906
77	1002	1899	3034	5628	6202	7820	10215	10167	11153	12038	13749	18790	17647	18909
78	1004	1902	3037	5631	6205	7823	10218	10170	11155	12041	13762	18793	17650	18912
79	1006	1905	3040	5634	6208	7826	10221	10173	11157	12044	13775	18796	17653	18915
80	1008	1908	3043	5637	6211	7829	10224	10176	11159	12047	13788	18799	17656	18918
81	1010	1911	3046	5640	6214	7832	10227	10179	11161	12050	13801	18802	17659	18921
82	1012	1914	3049	5643	6217	7835	10230	10182	11163	12053	13814	18805	17662	18924
83	1014	1917	3052	5646	6220	7838	10233	10185	11165	12056	13827	18808	17665	18927
84	1016	1920	3055	5649	6223	7841	10236	10188	11167	12059	13840	18811	17668	18930
85	1018	1923	3058	5652	6226	7844	10239	10191	11169	12062	13853	18814	17671	18933
86	1020	1926	3061	5655	6229	7847	10242	10194	11171	12065	13866	18817	17674	18936
87	1022	1929	3064	5658	6232	7850	10245	10197	11173	12068	13879	18820	17677	18939
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89	10													

All four tree-toppers waver as England's festival of football attracts 1m of the faithful over two days

Bonnie Prince Charming adds a fairy-tale footnote to the old year

By Peter Ball

Christmas is no bad time for the belief that "everything comes to him who waits" to be proved true and 18 minutes from the end of his penultimate opportunity to do so in 1983, Charlie Nicholas scored the goal the Highbury faithful have been awaiting since August.

That it was a somewhat unsatisfactory affair, coming from the penalty spot after Blake had wrestled down Meade, made no difference to their appreciation of the event. Whether the goal, which earned Arsenal a point against Birmingham, will be equally rewarding for Don Howe, is another matter, for much of the preceding 71 minutes were dire enough to provoke the thought that Boxing Day's result would not be the first time Arsenal had seen a false dawn at Tottenham this season.

The swirling wind forbade severe criticism but it inhibited Birmingham, who had lost their previous six League games, considerably less than Arsenal, and it was only the wastefulness of Arsenal, who saw the two excellent chances go begging before he laid on Hopkins' goal, which prevented Birmingham bringing Arsenal down to earth with a nasty bump.

If the Highbury crowd were ecstatic at the sight of one goal from their favourite, Wolverhampton's dwindling band also received a seasonal gift, the club notching their first home win since April by beating Everton 3-0 with goals from Crainie, Eves and Clarke. With Stoke idle, the win enabled Wolverhampton to cut the gap between them to five points, and they are now only eight points behind Birmingham in nineteenth position, a small enough deficit in these days of three points for a win to give them

something to look forward to in the New Year.

Unfortunately for Wolverhampton, only Watford of the teams above them failed to pick up at least one point, and Notts County and Leicester's interventions in the championship race should give them both considerable heart as they took a point apiece from Old Trafford and Anfield.

Possibly the Old Trafford crowd were kept down to an

average 41,544 - still the best for

any day on the day as they fell by

nearly 100,000 on the Boxing

Day total although they comfortably

exceeded one million over the two days - by

memories of last year's disappointing

holiday period.

If so, the fears of the missing

thousands were realized as

United threw away a 3-1 lead,

two goals from Justin Fashanu

in the last 10 minutes securing

Notts County a share of the

points. It would be wrong to

make any reference to Christmas

gifts, for United's defence

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make any reference to Christmas

gifts, for United's defence

have been generous to a fault for much of the season, and their collective failings were again apparent, both Fashanu's goals coming from bad mistakes.

It could have been worse for United, for the Leicester goalkeeper Mark Wallington's penalty save from Southees two minutes from time prevented Liverpool increasing the gap at the top. Had it gone in, it would have been a cruel ending for Leicester, who continued their tradition of making life difficult for Liverpool.

The visitors were two goals

ahead with 20 minutes remaining.

Smith and Banks stilling the

Kop, but Lee pulled one

back immediately after Banks'

effort, and then Rush equalized

with his twenty-first goal of the

season seven minutes from

time.

In the lower divisions the

leading teams are also finding

the holiday a testing time.

Sheffield Wednesday, the

second division leaders, fell to

their second defeat in 24 hours,

Middlesbrough inflicting their

first home defeat of the season

with goals by Sugrue and a

penalty by Currie.

Newcastle fared little better,

after their draw with Blackburn

on Boxing Day, by falling to

rampant Carlisle after leading

1-0. A penalty by Shoulder

against his old club proved the

turning point, and goals by

Coughlin and Craig in the last

two minutes gave Carlisle a 3-1

victory in a game spoilt by a

solitary hooligan attacking the

Newcastle goalkeeper, Thomas.

He took six policemen to restrain

him.

Manchester City are enjoying

the week rather more than their

neighbours, an impressive

performance at Huddersfield

bringing them a 3-1 win and

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Five minds, one thought: from left, Hill, Devonshire, Brookings, Stein and Horton. Photograph: Ian Stewart

Afternoon of crackle and crunch

By Stuart Jones

Football Correspondent

Luton Town.....0

West Ham U.....1

The music accompanying these

two sides, who are accustomed to

attacking with a flowing flourish,

was a sweet melody played on

violins. But yesterday the tune

began with a roll of drums and

ended with a crash of cymbals.

Strength rather than skill was

disappointingly, the dominant

theme.

There was no evidence of a

Christmas hangover no shortage of

commitment. Tackles crunched

and challenges crunched. Aylott, after

struggling with an ankle injury, got

half an hour, was forced eventually

to hobble away, and Brush and

Stephens received lengthy attention

before deciding to limp on.

Although Orr was booked for

charging Thomas for fully 30 yards

and felling him, there was no

apparent malicious intent. Yet even

the ball suffered from the fierce

treatment and had to be replaced. It

seemed poignant that the sky,

turning a rich black and purple,

came out in sympathy during the

bruising affair.

West Ham United, under pressure

more often than not, won it with

a scrambled goal typical of the

unlucky afternoon a dozen minutes

from the end. Cutce, in for the

suspended Swindhurst, led a

counter-attack, released Devonshire

down the left, and was there some

five yards out to volley in Whitson's

downward header.

The victory ends West Ham's

disappointing recent run and lifts

them into fourth place behind

Southampton. The defence continues

Luton Town's disappointing recent

run at home (they have collected

only four points out of a possible 15

at Kenilworth Road since the

middle of October) and dropped

them down to fifth.

There were occasional flashes of

sublimity. Almost all of them were

provided by Brookings and Devon-

shire, at the dusk of their

international careers, and by Walsh

and Stein, at the dawn of theirs.

Elliott, too, was impressive, encour-

agingly so: he is a combination of

the rare characteristics of being

young, English and a central

defender.

Yet most of the game lay hidden

beneath a heavy blanket of

competitive determination. As

Luton's pitch, a brown and green

pool of mud, was compared in

comparison with most of the other first division

header. Their only other direct

attempt came from a deflected

Brookings centre.

Luton were let down principally

by their defence. The West start

was genuinely troubled only by a

free kick in the first half and a

Stephens drive near the end.

Perhaps it was as well for West

Ham's goalkeeper. Suffering from a

stomach complaint, he has been

kept in isolation away from his

colleagues.

LUTON TOWN: L. Bailey, K. Stephens, M.

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Luton Town's disappointing recent

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Francome and Burrough Hill Lad complete Welsh coup

By Michael Phillips, Racing Correspondent

Jenny Pitman continued her triumphal march at Cheltenham yesterday when she trained the winner of the Coral Welsh National for the second year in succession. Twelve months ago it was Corbiere who did her work, but this time it was Burrough Hill Lad. When the weights were published Mrs Pitman put her head on the block and said Burrough Hill Lad was so well handicapped that he would win if he could get him right. How right she was. Those who took her at her word and looked at the odds on all odds from 20-1 down to 100-30 have her forthrightness and skills to thank for a nice coup, which cost the sponsors a pretty penny or two.

By any standards this was a fine feat of training. Burrough Hill Lad had not run in a steppechase for 15 months because of a strained chest ligament. To cure that he had to be hand-fed and to make matters worse his only race in the meantime was over hurdles. Mrs Pitman intended running Burrough Hill Lad over fences at either Worcester or Lingfield but the weather frustrated her.

Despite all this she was still able to turn Burrough Hill Lad out looking a picture of health and fitness in the paddock before yesterday's race. Ridden with the style and gait that one has grown to associate with John Francome, Burrough Hill Lad's performance matched his appearance.

The last time Francome rode at Cheltenham he incurred the displeasure of the stewards for hitting a horse too hard and too often with his whip. Ironically he barely has to move around the track at the moment. "A peach of a race," was the verdict of the race, which was the way that Mrs Pitman described Francome's riding. Earlier I had likened it unto the sort of race one normally only sees in a dream. When asked if he was worried at any stage of the race, the champion jockey, who is seldom caught short of words, replied: "No. My only anxiety was whether they had brought a wheelbarrow big enough for my present".

Francome added that Burrough Hill Lad was a very nice horse who had given him a really good feeling. Mrs Pitman promptly nominated him for the Cheltenham Gold Cup rather than the Grand National. This resulted in a 33-1 quote from those bookmakers present. To get things into perspective, however, it must be appreciated that Burrough Hill Lad was getting 12lb from the runner-up Royal Judgement, yesterday. Good horse that Royal Judgement is, he is not Gold Cup class.

Carrying 8lb more than when he won 12 months ago, Corbiere could finish only sixth this time but Mrs Pitman was not disappointed and he remains favourite for the Grand National. Corbiere blew hard afterwards and Alastair is still a long way away. Sadly, Get out of Me Way, my selection, hurt his back and had to be pulled up before the second last fence. He had been going well and was ideally placed when his rider Paul Barton suddenly felt him go wrong.

Dodgy Future was made favourite to win the Triumph Hurdle at Cheltenham in March after winning the Finale Junior Hurdle. But, even allowing for the fact that his trainer Stan Sedley has won the race twice in recent years with Pollardstown and Saxon Farm, the 12-1 offered by Hills looks mean.

Things did not go according to plan for Sheikh Ali Abu Khamis at Kempton on Boxing Day with the total eclipse of Fifty Dollars More in the big race and the defeat of Gave Brief and Silver Wind. But the man who has been the leading owner under National Hunt rules for the past two seasons can experience the sweeter side of life again. Warwick today by winning the Edward Courage Cup, run in memory of another great supporter of the winter game, with Half Free. Green Bramble, a decent hurdler but a big disappointment in his only race over fences, has an ideal opportunity to atone in the Jacob Marley Novices' Chase.



Happy habit: Jenny Pitman repeats her smile of 12 months ago after Burrough Hill Lad's Cheltenham success.

Mossmorran lands a gamble

By Michael Seely

The extraordinary rise-to-riches saga of Mossmorran continued at Wetherby yesterday. Michael Dickinson, the champion trainer, celebrated his triumphal return from Kempton by paying a visit to his local course to watch Mossmorran ride his own horse, Brownie's Gazette, to 12-length victory in the second division of the Bradford Novices' Hurdle. And Peter Eastbury gave another good crowd plenty to shout about when landing a double with Kamenmore and Torneo. But the story of the day undoubtedly concerned Mossmorran, who brought off a £10,000 gamble for three million, two publicans and a fruiterer in the Kamenmore handiicap hurdle.

Ridden by Graham Bradley, the 10-30 favourite forged clear of his 16 rivals halfway up the straight to beat Chetel by five lengths. Andy Scott has already executed one major coup this season when winning with Hills Guard at Newcastle and on this occasion the Alnwick trainer was full of similar confidence beforehand. "I told the owners to help themselves at this one. I won't get best," he said afterwards.

Scott certainly deserves all the credit that is going for his transformation of a moderate three-year-old into a horse who has now won six races and who will probably start favourite for the Ernest Robinson Hurdle at Cheltenham next week. "Vincent Burns, landlady of the Miners Arms at Mossorran, used to be a donkey. They were so shaggy that it was hard to tell which was which."

Ear-splitting yells of jubilation from his six joint-owners greeted Mossmorran on his return to the unsaddling enclosure. "We had to start our rounds at two this morning to get finished in time," Trevor Hanover, a Durham milkman, said. "But it's all been worthwhile after having had such a good bet." Mr Hanover is now looking forward to another win at the ring at Cheltenham.

Brownie's Gazette is the only horse that his owner has in training with Dickinson, for whom Brownie, the champion amateur, works as an assistant trainer. "He may be a good jockey, but he is one of my most difficult owners," said Dickinson. "The trouble is that he's such a slow payer."

Col Dick Warden, the owner of Kamenmore, is better known in his role as advisor of bloodstock to Sheikh Mohammed. He acted as the purchaser, not only of Sharn Dancer, but also of the record £10.2m Northern Dancer yearling colt at Keeneland last July. "I was in Lexington recently when someone told me that Capt Donald Swan had a likely-looking five-year-old in Northern Ireland," he said. "I'm not telling you what I gave for him, but although Kamenmore may have been cheap by some people's standards, he was certainly expensive by mine."

At Newcastle this afternoon Warden and Eastbury can strike another blow by winning the first division of the Partick Novices' Hurdle with Jobkore, a 15,000 guinea Newmarket sales purchase. Dickinson can capture the second division of this race with Facilis, an expensive failure when second to Millicent Grey at Kelso.

The Salmons Spray Hurdle is the feature at Fontwell. Cut A Dash had not been seen in public this season but Niall Smith's four-year-old best Wallow 'Will at Cheltenham last season and also finished strongly when third in the Placepot Hurdle at Kempton. Cut A Dash should now prove to good for the able but untutored young Connought Ruler.

The Tsarevich earns right to lose squiggle

By John Karter

For a horse who has won 10 races and who brought his total earnings to over £24,000 with a victory in yesterday's Ladbrokes Handicap Chase at Kempton Park, The Tsarevich has had some amazingly messy things said about him. Most of them are based on the fact that, as an up-and-coming hurdler at the Cheltenham Festival, The Tsarevich failed to run off the course towards the wedding boxes when in contention at the last fence.

Nicky Henderson, the seven-year-old's trainer, thinks it is about time people forgot that particular incident and that it is difficult to disagree with him. After all, who can blame any horse at the business end of a grueling race for preferring the safety and comfort of a stable to a slog in the mud up that steep hill.

Anyway, it was this piece of too-quick thinking plus another incident on the same course when The Tsarevich was once again accused of ducking the issue that landed the seven-year-old with a squiggle, the ultimate insult - a Timeform squiggle.

This is the sign in that revered Turf publication that denotes a horse who cannot be trusted. However, while Henderson was this particular "rogue's" badge removed forthwith, The Tsarevich's owner, Mrs Judy Henry, is quite happy for it to remain there as a reminder that he has been lucky.

Henderson says he has an answer, if one is needed, for those who say that The Tsarevich has not always been able to tackle the task in hand with the greatest relish - he has always found the others going too fast for him over two miles. This season The Tsarevich has won two miles and four furlongs over 2 1/2 miles and Henderson believes that three miles will suit him even better.

The Tsarevich has also resented being criticised in the past, and yesterday the race was run to suit him on all counts. Barry Wright on Mr Peapack set a fast pace and The Tsarevich was able to job along behind him until John White shot him into the lead approaching the final turn. From then on, it was a case of the further they went, the further The Tsarevich went away, and the nearer that squiggle came to being finally erased.

There must be times when jockeys wish they could award squiggles to horses who give them "hairy" rides, and if this were so, surely Michael Dickinson's eight-year-old, Fearless Imp, would be a leading candidate. Chris Bell, Dickinson's 21-year-old apprentice, must have felt like a rodeo rider yesterday. Fearless Imp rocketed off from the start in the Avenue Chase and proceeded to virtually knock several of the fences out of the ground before holding the challenge of Jagador by a whisker.

However, having survived all Fearless Imp's attempts to get rid of him, Bell - who looks after The Mighty Mac and Rathgorman at Harwood - was "unseated" by the seven-year-old. Henderson said that Fearless Imp had interfered with Jagador by bumping him near the finish. Jagador was awarded the race and Bell received a two-day suspension.

This was the second time during the afternoon that fortune smiled on Scudamore, because in the previous race, the Feltham Novices' Chase, he had deputized for Steve Smith. Dickinson - injured in an earlier race - on Day 1, made all the running to beat the favourite, a Kinsman. The winner and runner-up are both above-average novices and will both again in the Sun Alliance Chase at Cheltenham in March.

Australia expect Cash to deliver

Melbourne (Reuter) - Paul McNamee, in what he called "the first time in the history of the Davis Cup," expect Australia to deliver a victory in the Davis Cup final on Monday night.

The triumph over Australia within one victory of winning the Davis Cup for the first time since 1977, and they will be favoured to do so in the first of the reverse singles today (1980 or 1981) says John Nystrom.

John Fitzgerald, who beat Nystrom yesterday, and Mats Wilander, Cash's conqueror on the first day, will meet in the final match of the tie.

Hans Olsson, the Swedish captain, admitted his confidence was slipping away, but believed Sweden still have a good chance. Neale Fraser, the Australian captain, would not be drawn on which of the two final singles, he thought might be the decisive one.

Fraser said his doubles pair had not played particularly well when they won the Australian Open title two weeks ago, but yesterday in the Davis Cup, McNamee gave an outstanding performance, which he said was the pinnacle of his career. "That for me was the match of my life," he said.

Edmondson, provided sound support throughout and his powerful forehand drive made all the difference in the Swedish pair. Simonsson had trouble handling Edmondson's first serve all day while Larry had been plagued by unforced winning errors.

Larry's reply by Nystrom in Sweden's singles line up for the tie, double-faulted in the third game of the opening set to give Australia the critical break, and games went with the Australian pair.

The second set was similar. In the third set the Australians immediately tightened their grip. Simonsson lost his nerve in a fifth game and Larry surrendered his tie in the seventh.

McNamee and Edmondson extended their flawless doubles record in the Davis Cup, having won all four consecutive matches. Simonsson and Larry now have a 6-2 winning record in cup ties, and McNamee said he had lost to the Swedes three times in a previous year.

Olsson, who had "suggested" the Swedish players had been "disappointed about the tie after winning Australia's two main grass court championships," Wilander won the Australian Open to week ago and Nystrom won the New South Wales Open last week during which he beat Cash.

Nystrom, who lost to Fitzgerald 6-4, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4 on Monday, will be under immense pressure to keep Swedish hopes alive in the first match today. If he wins Sweden will be favoured to take the tie through Wilander, who gave Sweden a 1-0 lead yesterday with his 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 victory over Cash.

That, however, would be to underestimate Fitzgerald's tremendous will to win in Davis Cup singles.

© Miami Kent Carlson showed that he deserved to have a second chance to win the 1983 Junior Championships when he won the Orange Bowl Junior Championships (AFP reports).

Carlson, took the title earlier before Emilio Sanchez, of Spain, 6-2, 6-4 in the final.

Harvestown underlines Irish novice strength

From Our Irish Correspondent

Further evidence that this year's crop of Irish novice chasers is the best for some years came at Leopardstown yesterday when Harvestown, the only novice in the field, proved too good for his dozen opponents of far greater experience in the Fintona Handicap Chase over three miles. As his regular partner Brendan Sheridan is still nursing an injured shoulder, it turned out to be a one-off ride for Tommy Carmody, and he was one of the better horses to overcome both the tattering Young Driver and a wandering loose horse.

Harvestown appeared to have very little room going into the final furlong, but he was not to be outdone. Carmody drove his mount through. Harvestown, a six-year-old, was the youngest runner in the field and only three of his opponents, Royal Road, Dymalman and Kilkenny, were trying to give him weight.

Royal Road ran well under top weight but the unlucky horse who was probably Sicilian Answer who skidded on landing over the second last fence and all but came off his seat, collapsing very smoothly at the time.

This afternoon, it was Black and White who was sponsoring a handicap hurdle, a handicap which was won by a horse named Music. Disqualified for carrying the wrong weight after winning the Black and White Hurdle at Fairyhouse, in my opinion to gain a second chance, Peter McCreary has a lively lightweight, Rock Example, to represent him in the chase, the weights for which are headed by a former champion over this distance, Drumcree.

Fontwell Park

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Today's television and radio programmes

Edited by Peter Dear

BBC 1

6.50 **Carfax AM**, News headlines, weather, traffic and sports bulletins. Also available to viewers with television sets without the teletext facility.

6.50 **Breakfast Time** with Frank Bough and Selina Scott. News at 6.30, 7.00, 7.30, 8.00 and 8.30 with headlines on the quarter hour; regional news, weather and traffic at 6.45, 7.15, 7.45 and 8.15; today's television previewed at 8.55; a review of the morning papers at 7.15 and 8.15. Miss Smith's pop news between 7.30 and 8.00; *Either/Or* between 7.30 and 8.00 and again between 8.30 and 8.45; *Horoscopes* at 8.35.

9.00 **The New Adventures of Flash Gordon**, Gromlin and the Dragon join Royal Wedding. 9.25 *Why Don't You...?* 7 ideas for bored youngsters, 5.50 *World News* (10.10) *Play Centre*, Bill Harrison begins a new series, 10.10 *Jackanory*, Andrew Burt with part two of *The Dangerous Journey* (10.15) *Jackanory* goes to *Countdown* (10.30) *Play School*, presented by Elizabeth Milbank and Ian Lauchlan, 10.55 *Today's Topical*, 11.10 *Three Tall Tales*, Donald Duck cartoons.

12.00 **Look Back With Noakes**, John Noakes takes the Road to the Isles, 12.30 *News Afternoon* with Frances Cowdell, 12.45 *Regional News* (London and SE only), Financial report followed by news headlines with subtitles, 12.45 *Cartoon*: Tom and Jerry, 1.00 *Bonanza*, Ben's double sets up a land swindle.

1.50 **Film: Dodge City** (1939) starring Errol Flynn as the man who tames the wild west town. Directed by Michael Curtiz, 3.30 *The World of Stanley Holloway*, His career charted by Alan Jay Lerner.

4.20 **Nanny, It's the King** (1930), 4.30 *Cartoon* with Colin Jeavons, Roy Kinnear and Simon Shepherd in part one of *James Thurber's Tale*, The 13 Clocks, 4.45 *Gulliver's Travels*, An animated cartoon (11), 5.35 *Love the Engine*, Oliver Postgate's steamship hero in *Cold Sheep* (1).

5.40 **News with Frances Cowdell**.

5.50 **Regional news magazines**.

6.00 **Film: The Great Escape** (1963) starring Steve McQueen, James Garner and Richard Attenborough. World War Two escapees from Stalag Luft North story, based on fact. Lots of stiff upper lips and a spectacular motorbike ride from Steve McQueen. A strong supporting cast includes Charles Bronson, Donald Sutherland and James Coburn. Directed by John Sturges.

8.45 **News with John Humphrys**.

8.55 **The Best of Three of a Kind**, Highlights of the award-winning comedy series featuring Lenny Henry, Yazzie Ullman and David Copperfield.

9.30 **Review '83** presented by Fred Emswold and Sue Lawley. The most memorable and sometimes amusing events of the past year. (see choice).

10.00 **Film: "Silent Movie"** as Sergeant Bilko, the flyest NCO in the United States Army, this week with an allegory (1).

11.15 **News with John Humphrys**. An international golf challenge played over nine holes of the Dufferin Course at Woburn. Tonight Germany's Bernhard Langer plays Sandra Henrich of the United States. The commentator is Peter Allis.

12.00 **Weather**.

TV-am

6.25 **Good Morning Britain** presented by Nick Owen and John Stapleton. The morning papers reviewed at 6.25; news at 6.30, 7.00, 7.30, 8.00 and 8.30; exercises at 8.45 and 8.55; *Jen Barnett's* pick of the year at 8.40 and 8.55; a celebrity as he or she visits their home town at 7.45; pop video of the year at 7.55; magic moments at 8.05; *Eve Pollard's* gossip column at 8.35; and *Look Back With Noakes* at 8.55.

ITV/LONDON

8.25 **Thames news headlines** followed by *Sesame Street* in which the Muppets make learning a bit of fun 10.25 *Film: Gentleman* (1976). A made for television movie starring Ben Murphy as Sam Casey, an agent for an organization called Intersect, who, after an underwater accident, discovers that he has the ability to become invisible at will. Directed by Alan Levi.

12.00 **Button Moon**, Puppet adventures of the Spoon teller 12.10 *Rainbow*. Learning with puppets 12.30 *Look Who's Talking*, Derek Bates with Paul Square.

1.00 **News with Leonard Parkin** 1.20 *Thames News* 1.30 *News on Peter Allis* looks back to the year 1983 - a memoir of the year's events, standards with the Queen's coronation, the conquest of Everest and the winning of the Ashes by England for the first time in 20 years (1) 2.30 *A Country Practice*.

3.30 **Film: The Thief of Baghdad** (1979) starring Roddy McDowall, Peter Ustinov and Terence Stamp. The Arabian Nights' story about the good and kindly but penniless Prince Taj who enters the help of a thief in a race with the wicked and evil Wazir for the hand of the Caliph's daughter, Princess Yasmine. Directed by Clive Donner.

5.15 **Benji at Marnehead**. The crafty canine tries to subdue and win the heart of Afghans.

5.45 **News 6.00 Thames news**.

6.35 **Crossroads**, Glenda Banks begins to get labour pains at the Christmas party.

7.00 **Name That Tune**. Fast moving musical quiz compared by Tom O'Connor.

7.30 **Coronation Street**, Rita receives a visit from the mysterious woman who tells her about her relationship with Rita's late husband.

8.00 **Jim Davidson's Special**. Variety show presented by the Cockney comedian.

9.00 **Chessgame**. The final part of the spy mystery and Rod Audley and his team research the background of two Oxford students - one of whom has recently met a violent death. Their investigations lead to a surprising encounter with Adrian's Wall. Starring Terence Stamp.

10.00 **News**.

10.15 **Film: Carrie** (1976) starring Sissy Spacek, Piper Laurie and John Travolta. A really scary tale of a high school girl - despised by her fellow pupils and sexually suppressed by her mother - who discovers she has the faculty of telekinesis. The faculty to move things at a distance without touching them. The faint-hearted should be warned about the gruesome ending. Directed by Brian De Palma.

12.10 **Night Thoughts** from Max Sinclair.



Virginia McKenna in *The Case of the Frightened Lady*, BBC 2 8.15pm

BBC 2

1.40 **Film: Presenting Lily Mars** (1955) starring Judy Garland and Van Heflin. The first showing on British television of this lighthearted musical comedy about a small-time girl who wants to become a Hollywood actress. With the musical *Tommy* and Bob Crosby bands. Directed by Norman Taurog.

3.20 **Machines in Motion**. Gathering Momentum is the title of the second lecture for young people given by Professor Leonard Mauder on the subjects of why and how things move.

4.20 **A Walton Special**. The last of the three films based on the characters of the Walton's television series. It is now 1947, a few days before Thanksgiving. The boys are away back from the war but the family is disrupted about the many other men that have not survived. To shake them out of their maudlin state in time for the Thanksgiving dinner, Elizabeth takes matters into her own hands.

5.55 **News summary with subtitles**.

6.00 **World Snooker: The Year of the 147**. Highlights from the memorable Embassy World (1).

6.15 **Play: The Case of the Frightened Lady**, by Edgar Wallace, adapted for television by Victor Pemberton. The mysterious murder of Lord Leabon's young chauffeur brings Scotland Yard's Detective Chief Superintendent Tanner and his assistant Sergeant Toddy to investigate. Lord Leabon, an eccentric young man, dominated by his mother, is due to marry Alisa, a lady who sleazes and is in constant fear of death. Why should this be? With Virginia McKenna, Warren Clark and Tim Woodward. The director is Chris Menaul (see choice).

8.30 **Film: Funeral in Berlin** (1966) starring Michael Caine as Harry Palmer in the second of Len Caillet's spy thrillers. This time Harry is commissioned to bring over from East Berlin a colonel in the Russian intelligence who has made overtures to the West about defecating. Is he bluffing? Harry has his doubts. Directed by Guy Hamilton.

11.10 **News with John Humphrys**.

11.15 **Film: Horse Feathers** (1932) starring the Marx Brothers. Groucho becomes the head of a college. To bolster the football team he signs what he thinks are two ace players. Instead, he finds he has a prohibition breaker and a dog catcher. Directed by Norman Foster.

12.10 **Closedown**.

CHANNEL 4

12.30 **Animated Fables**. Three fables chosen by Antonette Moss, director of the Cambridge Animation Festival. From the United States, *Arrow to the Sun*; from Trinidad, *Kumbee*; and from Britain, *Mr Pencil*.

1.00 **Musicians**. A documentary about the Sri Lankan brothers, Rohan and Druvud Saran; one a classical cellist, the other a pianist.

2.00 **World Snooker**. The men's singles final between Liam Swie King and Louk Slegers, both from Indonesia. A game that was hailed as a classic by the British press.

3.00 **Film: Take Me Out to the Ball Game** (1949) starring Gene Kelly. A Busby Berkeley musical, released in Britain under the title *Everybody's Dancin'*. Cheering, about a couple of music hall troupers who spend their summers playing for a baseball team. Their egos are dented when they learn that the team they play for has been taken over by a woman.

4.45 **Film: Victoria the Great** (1937) starring Anna Neagle as the queen with Anton Walbrook as her consort, Albert. A straightforward biography of the longest reigning monarch that ran for more than a year in London and won an Oscar.

7.00 **Channel Four News**. Norman St John Stevens with a personal review of the year.

7.30 **Priestland Right and Wrong**. In the fifth of his six programme series Gerald Priestland turns to the countryside. His is an unashamedly view of environmentalism and animal rights and he believes that townships have an over-riding view of the countryside and that they are wrong to think that they can go 'back to nature'.

8.00 **Brookside**. It's New Year's Eve and party-time in the Close where the Jackson's festivities spill out on to the pavement.

8.35 **What the Dicknarr**. A Victorian entertainment set in Dickens's Devonshire Terrace house and based on Dickens's love of cooking.

10.00 **Land of the Lakes**. The first of three programmes in which Melvyn Bragg talks about and explores the area of his birthplace. In this programme he traces the area's 600 million year history.

10.55 **Film: Think Fast, Mr Moto** (1937) starring Peter Lorre. The Japanese detective foils a gang of smugglers aboard a ship sailing from San Francisco to Shanghai. Directed by Norman Foster.

12.10 **Closedown**.

CHOICE

lady is Alisa (Elizabeth Garvie), the reluctant fiancée of Lady Leabon's son. Wide-eyed and white as a sheet, a sleep-walker in fear of her life she is the person Lady Leabon is relying on to eventually produce an heir to perpetuate the family name. But why is she so frightened? Director Chris Menaul keeps the pace brisk without losing any of the suspense. One of Leabon's best-known voices, Mervyn Bragg, tonight begins a three-part series to be transmitted on consecutive nights, *LAND OF THE LAKES* (Channel 4 10.00pm) in which Melvyn Bragg and a series that is sure to appeal to the many millions of tourists who are drawn to the 600 square mile area every year. Tonight's programme deals with the history of the formation of the area - both by nature and by man - and the help of experts and wonderful aerial photography Mr Bragg manages to capture the essence of the rugged and breathtakingly beautiful district. If the crucial but anecdotal utterances of Mr Bragg are not to your taste there is a well-modulated alternative, *REVIEW OF THE YEAR* (BBC1 9.30pm) in which the *Top of the Pops* and *Sue Lawley's Nine O'Clock News* feature a number of the year's most serious and serious and silly.

Radio 4

6.25 **Shipping Forecast**. 6.30 **News Briefing**. 6.35 **Daybreak** with Charles Colville. 6.55 **Weather**, 7.00 **News Summary**. 7.30 **Today**, including 7.30 *News Summary*, 7.45 *Thought for the Day*, 8.00 *Today's News*, 8.35 *Sport*.

8.30 **Quelques**. Uniquely, Nigel Peas is the guest on *Quelques*, a panel of the panel consists of Celia Haddon, Ludovic Kennedy, Colin Welland, and John Hume (1).

8.50 **Desert Island Discs**. Tom Stammers, the pianist, chooses a record to take to a desert island. 9.00 **News**. 9.05 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.10 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.15 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.20 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.25 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.30 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.35 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.40 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.45 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.50 **Travellers' Point of View. 9.55 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.00 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.05 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.10 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.15 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.20 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.25 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.30 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.35 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.40 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.45 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.50 **Travellers' Point of View. 10.55 **Travellers' Point of View. 11.00 **Travellers' Point of View. 11.05 **Travellers' Point of View. 11.10 **Travellers' Point of View. 11.15 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Thatcher determined to hold course

Continued from page 1

took over must be translated into votes in those contests if the party is to see off the Alliance and reestablish itself as the unrivalled alternative to the Thatcher Government.

Because he believes the elections will be regarded as a verdict by the electorate on the first year of the Government's second term, Mr. Kinnock wants to inspire the interest of party activists and workers in the elections to Strasbourg - something about which they have never been too enthusiastic.

For a party trying to rebuild its popular support there are obvious drawbacks in treating the European elections as a mid-term test, and those are the expected low poll and the tendency among many voters to believe that their best interests in Europe are served by electing members of the Government party.

Mrs Thatcher's fairly buoyant outlook for the next decade was reflected in her new year interview with *Reader's Digest*, in which she looked forward to "an era of enterprise".

For years it had been said that Britain was drifting, that having lost an empire she had not yet found a role. Mrs Thatcher said:

"Well I want the 1980s to be the decade when we get back on course. We have the courage, the compassion and the inventiveness, all the ingredients of great nations. What can hold us back? Only ourselves. We must never again allow state monopoly to replace competition or collectivism to strangle individual endeavour."

She hoped that Britain in the late 1980s would be a society in which substantially better provision could be made for the elderly, the sick and the disabled and in which the state existed for the individual and not the individual for the state, "a place where Britons will find greater scope for their creativity and far higher rewards for their efforts."

Mrs Thatcher said that the country might in some ways "be a chiller, bummer, less cosy place but infinitely more invigorating".

The Prime Minister's warning of the possibility of a chiller and bummer year ahead was described yesterday by Mr. Gerald Kaufman, the shadow home secretary, as an admission that she had "swindled" the electorate last June, and that millions had been cheated into voting for her.

Year in which the shy princess blossomed into a royal



Touching gestures: Delighting Chelsea pensioners and New Zealand's Minister of Maori Affairs, Mr Ben Cross.

The Princess of Wales's many faces: The glittering royal personage; adoring mother; understanding hospital visitor and a target of fashion editors' criticism.

By Alan Hamilton

It was an unlikely act, that of the hitherto obscure Prime Minister of Newfoundland, into which the Princess of Wales unloaded her most intimate public thoughts of the year. "I am finding it very difficult," she admitted, "to cope with the pressures of being Princess of Wales, but I am learning to cope. I have matured a lot recently and got used to coping with things." The hitherto obscure Prime Minister wasted only as much time as it takes to assemble the royal press corps before ensuring that the Princess's confidences were made known to the entire world. It is one of the things she finds difficult to cope with.

Her public would not quibble with her assessment of her progress. During 1983 the Princess had enhanced, and more importantly has survived, her unchallenged position

as the media market leader of the planet, her frailties of shyness and temperament merely magnifying the affection felt towards her.

What hastened her maturity was the experience of two overseas tours, to Canada and the Antipodes, on which she learned to live with star crowds of a quarter of a million at the time. She had to endure an occasional skirmish with what she called the "wolf pack" of the press, but much worse, in both Canada and Australia, the massed bickering of fashion editors who derided her clothes as being far too severe and matronly.

No matter; she actually created new jobs in the British shoe industry during the year as the nation's tall women flocked to follow her example of low heels.

She and the Prince of Wales achieved other, more positive results on their two main foreign tours. Even

the Soviet Union and four other communist nations on the organizing committee agreed that the Royal couple were the ideal people to open the World University Games in Edmonton, Alberta. On the same tour, the French Canadian press displayed particular warmth towards them, although their programme delicately avoided any official engagements in Quebec.

In Australia, the reception can have been of no benefit whatsoever to Australia's slow drift towards becoming a Commonwealth republic.

The Princess elicited sympathy from the unlikeliest quarters. Early in the year, when reports of her private loneliness and unhappiness at the role into which she had been cast were rife in the British press, the *Harbin Daily*, a provincial paper in the north-east of the People's Republic of China, paid tribute to the young

mother's simplicity and natural charm.

At home, 1983 was the year in which the Princess blossomed into a fully fledged professional royal personage, rather than being a mere decorative junior partner in what her mother-in-law privately refers to as "the firm".

During the year the Princess agreed to become patron of seven new organizations: The Wales Craft Council, Swansea Festival of Music and Arts, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the British Deaf Association, the National Children's Orchestra, London City Ballet, and the youth and junior division of the British Red Cross Society.

She was already patron of the Malcolm Sargeant Cancer Fund for Children, Welsh National Opera, the Royal School for the Blind at

Leatherhead, the Pre-School Playgroups Association, and The Albany, a London east end community association.

Her public engagements during the year largely reflected those specific interests. Her diary for 1983 shows that she carried out 76 public engagements, of which 45 were without her husband. Her diary was therefore considerably fuller than in the previous year, when much of her time was taken up with the birth of Prince William.

She has become one of the busiest members of the Royal Family, although her husband was slightly ahead of her in 1983 with 52 public engagements. Among many other duties, the Princess opened six hospitals, a shopping centre and a bridge, was made a Freeman of the Grocers' Company, opened a toy factory in Peterlee, visited a housing

estate in Glasgow and a marmalade factory in Dundee, and delighted the Chelsea pensioners with her presence on Founder's Day.

But her forte, which occupied her most and saw her most at ease, was visiting the very young, the very old, and the sick, to whom she brought a touching directness.

Although observers continue to fret about her thinness, there is general agreement that the Princess is displaying much greater confidence and measurably greater ease in her role.

There is no more remarkable evidence of her universal appeal than her appearance during 1983, with her year-old son, on a commemorative stamp issued by the postal authorities of North Korea, a country not hitherto known for its embrace of indefinable ideals of constitutional monarchy.

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Today's events

Music
Concert by The Hilliard Ensemble, Randolph Hotel, Oxford, 8.
Last chance to see
Work by Alison Britton, new ceramics, Brian Utley, still life on paper, Michael Rothstein, new prints, Diana Hobson, pate de verre revived: Oxford Gallery, 23 High Street, Oxford: 10 to 5 (ends today).
Crafts For Christmas: Leicester-shire Guild of Craftsman, Leicester-shire Museum and Art Gallery, 96 New Walk, Leicester: 10 to 5.30 (ends today).

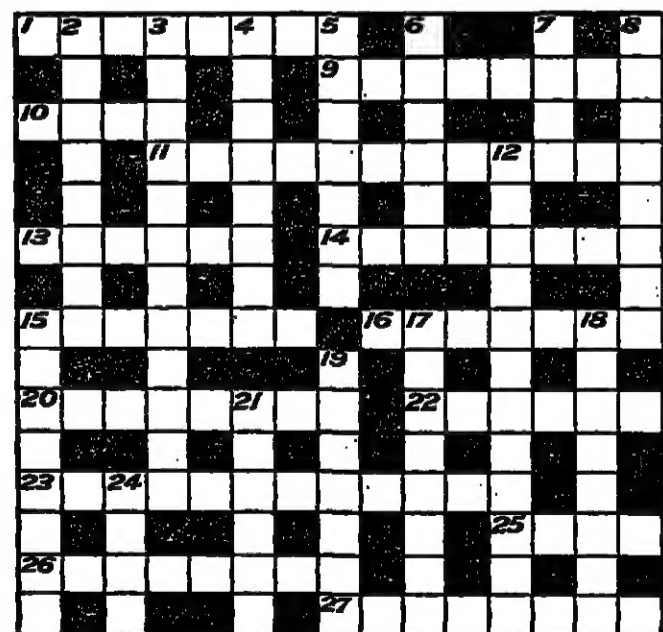
New exhibition

Image - last of a series of three exhibitions sponsored by the Arts Council, Graves Art Gallery, Surrey Street, Sheffield: Mon to Sat 10 to 8, Sun 2 to 5 (until Jan 29).
Exhibitions in progress
Harveys History of Wine Collection at the Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery, Chequer Road, Doncaster, Mon to Thur 10 to 5, Sun 2 to 5, closed Fri (until Jan 29).
David Donaldson retrospective, City Art Centre, 2 Market Street, Edinburgh: Mon to Sat 10 to 5, closed Sun (until Jan 28).
Sainsbury's Images for Today: Winners of competition for British

Best fiction of 1983

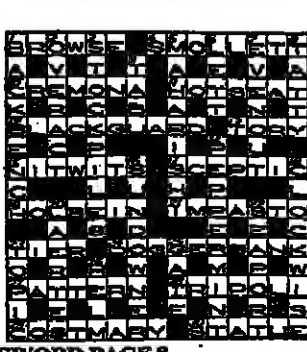
The Literary Editor's selection of novels published this year.
A Coin in Nine Hands, by Marguerite Yourcenar, translated by Dori Katz (Aldan Ellis, £7.95).
Act of Darkness, by Francis King (Hutchinson, £8.50).
Entry into Jerusalem, by Stanley Middleton (Hutchinson, £7.50).
The Book of the Dead, by William Trevor (The Bodley Head, £7.50).
Light by Day, by E. V. Rieu (Hutchinson, £5.50).
Look at Me, by Anita Brookner (Corgi, £7.50).
Sebastian, by Lawrence Sanders (Faber, £7.50).
Shame, by Graham Greene (Corgi, £7.50).
The Silence of the Lambs, by Thomas Harris (Hamish Hamilton, £8.95).
The Testament of Oscar Wilde, by Peter Ackroyd (Hamish Hamilton, £7.95).
The Little Drummer Girl, by John Le Carré (Hodder & Stoughton, £8.95).
The Other Side of the Fire, by Bruce Thomas Ellis (Duckworth, £7.95).
The Princess's Pearl, by Ruth Winder (Corgi, £7.95).
The Proprietor, by Ann Skuse (Macmillan, £8.95).
Waterland, by Graham Swift (Helmman, £7.95).

The Times Crossword Puzzle No 16,320



- ACROSS**
- 1 Horse one girl gives another (8).
 - 2 Muslim I got in non-soak material (8).
 - 3 A revolutionary transport aid (4).
 - 4 Odd traits include love of essayist - and of philosopher (12).
 - 5 Right about the church being on the rocks? (6).
 - 6 He was associated with Holmes - and the violin, in general (8).
 - 7 Pompous, looking down on others? (7).
 - 8 Earl has disorder in joint, causing disfigurement (7).
 - 9 Mixed drink - preferred cold in Aberdeen, perhaps (4,4).
 - 10 Established joiner in smart surroundings (8).
- DOWN**
- 1 Hail's cheerful subject, for one (8).
 - 2 This may help to immobilise an expiring motorist (12).
 - 3 Merciful treatment for the foreign relative embracing the Pole (8).
 - 4 Article on the drink about to lead France, perhaps (7).
 - 5 Arrangement made Curtis gaps (6).
 - 6 French author knocked down? (4).
 - 7 Bound to include need of change, though superficial (4,4).
 - 8 Generous, but might have to be patient? (5,7).
 - 9 Dodge the team walk (4,4).
 - 10 Extremely good article features aromatic plant (8).
 - 11 Vessel a servant upset in the history (8).
 - 12 Lower dam - seen to crumble (7).
 - 13 Call to make advances, perhaps (6).
 - 14 Always cut head off? (4).

Solution of Puzzle No 16,319



CONCISE CROSSWORD PAGE 3

Sales guide

London and provincial sales in progress include: Liberty, Regent Street, W1; Debenhams, all branches; Rayne, New Bond Street, W1; Aquascutum, Regent Street, W1; Jager, Regent Street and branches; Barbers, Kensington, D. H. Evans, Oxford Street, W1; Scotch House, 84 and 91 Regent Street, W1; Burberry, 18-22 Haymarket, SW1; 165 Regent Street, W1; and 64 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, Dingles, Plymouth; Moss Bros; Simpson, Piccadilly, W1; Country Casuals; Bally; Russell and Bromley. Sales starting today include: British Home Stores; Habitat; London Bedding Centre; Joanne Street, SW1; Selfridges; Oxford Street, W1; Fenwick; New Bond Street, W1; Dickens and Jones; Richmond and Milton Keynes; Army and Navy; Victoria; Laura Ashley, all branches; Austin Reed, all branches; Allers of Croydon; Hornes, Woolworth; John Lewis (Jones Brothers and Pratts tomorrow).

The papers

The Daily Nation (Independent) of Nairobi comments on the Queen's Christmas message, saying that she called for "modern technology to be harnessed to bridge the gap between rich and poor countries, a call it heartily endorses. Instead of narrowing, as expected, as the poor countries modernized their economies, the gap is widening. There have been talks about the need to change the world economic order, but they have remained just that - talks.

Rally charges

A new system of charging for the use of Forestry Commission land for motor rallies has been agreed with the Royal Automobile Club Motorist Sports Association with effect from January 1.

Under the five-year agreement the charge for commission roads and tracks will be based on the number of miles run, irrespective of the number of starters.

A reduced charge for second and subsequent use of a route in the same rally and for a club event should encourage the staging of dual events, as will the increase in the time allowed for a minor rally from two hours to three hours.

The primary charge will be £110 a mile with a £90 a mile charge for second and subsequent use. The previous charge was £1.25 a starter mile.

In recent years the mileage length of rally routes on Forestry Commission roads has increased significantly while the number of starters has declined.

For further information please contact Roy Gregor, Forestry Commission, 231 Corporation Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT, telephone 031-334 0303, ext 289.

The pound

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	1.66	1.56
Austria Sch	29.95	27.40
Belgium Fr	84.50	80.25
Canada \$	1.85	1.77
Denmark Kr	14.90	14.15
Finland Mk	8.75	8.35
France Fr	124.5	119.0
Germany DM	4.10	3.90
Greece Dr	160.00	150.00
Hong Kong \$	11.40	10.80
Italy Lira	2485.00	2365.00
Japan Yen	349.00	331.00
Netherlands Gld	4.61	4.38
Norway Kr	11.60	11.00
Portugal Esc	198.00	187.00
Spain Ptas	162.00	152.00
Sweden Kr	12.09	11.44
Switzerland Fr	3.27	3.10
USA \$	1.48	1.42
Yugoslavia Dnr	218.00	206.00

Rates for small denominations bank notes only. Some supplied yesterday by Barclays Bank. International Ltd. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques and other foreign currency business.

Retail Price Index: 341.9.

London: The FT Index closed 1.2 down last Friday at 775.8.

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Roads

London and South-east: M20: From A30 (junction 3/Maidstone West) to 1/4 mile east of A249 (junction 7/Sheerness, Sittingbourne), major reconstruction, contraflow traffic on both carriageways, avoid if possible. A3: Clapham Road, Lambeth, sewer repairs, lane restrictions, North-bound bus lane closed, A40: Western Avenue between Horse-dene Lane and Midway Parade, new layout, long delays.

Wales and West: A303: Wincanton, Somerset, at Holton, resurfacing, temporary lights, restrictions, Sparkford and resurfacing and temporary lights at Seavington and Ilminster. A40: Banvelin-Camarthen, Dyfed, roadworks, temporary lights, diversion, M5: Junction 26 (Wellington) and 27 (Tiverton), resurfacing both carriageways.

North: A1: Felton bypass on river Coquet bridge, Northumberland, section closed, northbound only one lane open, temporary signals. A628: South Yorkshire. Improvement works to Thurnstone river bridge. Single lane traffic controlled by signals. A66: Widening and strengthening of bridge at Eden Lodge, North-west of Appleby, Midlands: A617: Roadworks at Bramley Vale, Derbyshire, South-east of Chesterfield, controlled by signals. A6: Belper, Derbyshire, signals, roadworks. A61: Signals controlling traffic at Clay Cross, Derbyshire.

Scotland: A95: 1/4 mile East of Criggachie, Morayshire, land slip, single lane traffic with lights (24 hrs). A803: Road reconstruction along Springfield Road, near Hainthorn Street, lane closure, delays. A68: North of Dalkeith, Glasgow, road subsidence, traffic over 30 cwt diverted, northbound, traffic single lane.

Information supplied by the A.A.

Anniversaries

Births: Woodrow Wilson, 28th president of the USA, 1913-21, Staunton, Virginia, 1856; Pio Baroja, novelist, San Sebastian, Spain, 1872; Sir Arthur Eddington, astronomer and physicist, Kent, 1882; Deaths: Thomas Babington Macaulay, Baron Macaulay, statesman and historian, London, 1859; George Gissing, novelist, author of *New Grub Street*, St Jean de Luz, France, 1903; Maurice Ravel, composer, Paris, 1937.

Today is the Feast of the Holy Innocents. They were the children of Bethlehem who were massacred by Herod (Matthew 2, xv).

London

Yesterday's Temp: max 6 pm to 7.30 am, 13C (55F); min 5 pm to 6 am, 6C (43F). Humidity: 60%, 61% per cent. Rain: 24hr to 6 pm, trace; Sun: 24hr to 6 pm, 18 hr, rain; rain sea level, 6 pm 1025.1 millibars, steady.

Highest and lowest

Yesterday: Highest day temp: St Alb's Head, near Berkley 16C (61F). Lowest day temp: Lowest: 11C (52F). Highest rainfall: Cape Wrath 1.1in; highest rain rate: Colwyn Bay 2.3hr.

Weather forecast

A frontal trough will be slow moving over northern Britain as pressure remains high in S. Most of England and Wales will be dry and bright at times.

6am to midnight

London, SE, Central, E, SW, NW, Central N England, East Anglia, Midlands, Channel Islands, Wales: Mainly dry, some drizzle and fog on hills, bright at times; wind SW, moderate or fresh; very mild, max temp 10 to 13C (50 to 55F). Lake District, Isle of Man, NE England, Borders, Edinburgh, Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, Northern Ireland: Rain at times; wind SW, moderate or fresh; very mild in places, max temp 9 to 11C (48 to 52F). Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Occasional showers, bright intervals; wind SW, fresh or strong; near normal temp, max 6 to 8C (43 to 46F).

Outlook for tomorrow and Friday: Continuing changeable and becoming somewhat colder.

SEA PASSAGES: S North Sea, Straits of Dover, English Channel (E), St George's Channel, Wind SW or W fresh to strong, 10-12 g-kts; H-hill, m-b, m-rain, s-snow, W-funderland; p-powers. Waves show wind direction, wind speed (mph) noted, temperatures in degrees.

Sun rises: 8.0am Sun sets: 3.58pm

Moon rises: 12.0am Moon sets: 12.48pm

New Moon: January 3.

Lighting-up time

London 4.28 pm to 7.30 am
Bristol 4.38 pm to 7.48 am
Edinburgh 4.14 pm to 7.14 am
Manchester 4.26 pm to 7.55 am
Penzance 4.56 pm to 7.51 am

Yesterday

Temperatures at midday yesterday: c, cloud; f, fair; s, sun; r, rain; fog, fog; s, sun; sn, snow.

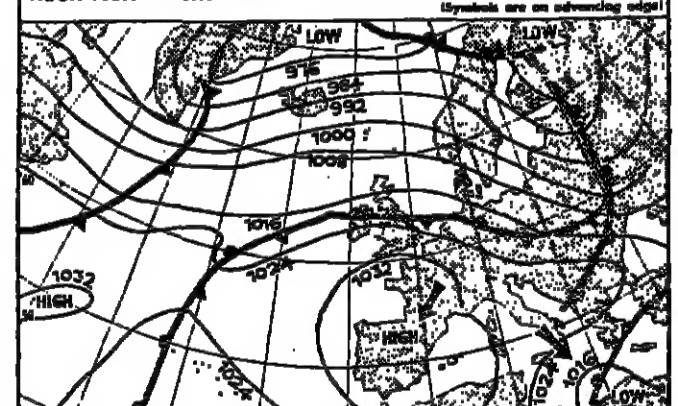
	C	F	C	F
Belfast	11	52	12	54
Birmingham	12	54	13	55
Blackpool	11	52	12	54
Bristol	12	54	13	55
Cardiff	11	52	12	54
Edinburgh	12	54	13	55
Glasgow	12	54	13	55

Abroad

MIDWAY: c, cloud; f, fair; fog, fog; r, rain; s, sun; sn, snow.

	C	F	C	F
Algeria	18	64	19	66
Alexandria	18	64	19	66
Amman	18	64	19	66
Antwerp	12	54	13	55
Athens	12	54	13	55
Bahia	21	70	22	72
Barcelona	12	54	13	55
Bombay	28	82	29	84
Buenos Aires	12	54	13	55
Calcutta	28	82	29	84
Cairo	28	82	29	84
Canton	12	54	13	55
Cebu	28	82	29	84
Colon	28	82	29	84
Hankow	12	54	13	55
Hong Kong	12	54	13	55
Kobe	12	54	13	55
London	12	54	13	55
Lyons	12	54	13	55
Manila	28	82	29	84
Medan	28	82	29	84
Montevideo	12	54	13	55
Moscow	12	54	13	55
Mumbai	28	82	29	84
Nairobi	12	54	13	55
Paris	12	54	13	55
Peking	12	54	13	55
Perth	12	54	13	55
Rangoon	28	82	29	84
Rio de Janeiro	12	54	13	55
Sao Paulo	12	54	13	55
Shanghai	12	54	13	55
Singapore	28	82	29	84
Sourabaya	28	82	29	84
Taipei	12	54	13	55
Tokyo	12	54	13	55
Yokohama	12	54	13	55

NOON TODAY Pressure is shown in millibars (mbar) (1013.25 mbar = 30 in. Hg)



High tides

Location	AM	PM	AM	PM
London Bridge	8.48	8.57	6.55	6.55
Aberdeen	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Aberystwyth	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Belfast	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Cardiff	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Dumfries	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Dover	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Falmouth	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Glasgow	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Hull	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Worcester	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
London	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Manchester	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Newcastle	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Nottingham	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Sheffield	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Southampton	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Swansea	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Torquay	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Wexford	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Woolwich	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55
Wynneferry	8.27	8.37	6.55	6.55

Around